■ ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1 ■ METRO / A16

Jennifer Aniston to PDI: It's been a tough year but I wouldn't change a thing

Metro police director Vidal Querol sacks Novaliches police chief for 'jueteng'

Do you have a story to tell about Edsa I? The INQUIRER is looking for those untold stories (photos, too) that contributed, no matter how small, to the first People Power in 1986 that so stunned the world and inspired and emboldened people in chains everywhere to break free. The contributions that will be selected by the editors will be used for the INQUIRER's special celebration of the 20th anniversary of Edsa I. **Send your contribution, with your address and contact number, not later than Feb. 15 to fdelmundo@inquirer.com.ph**

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

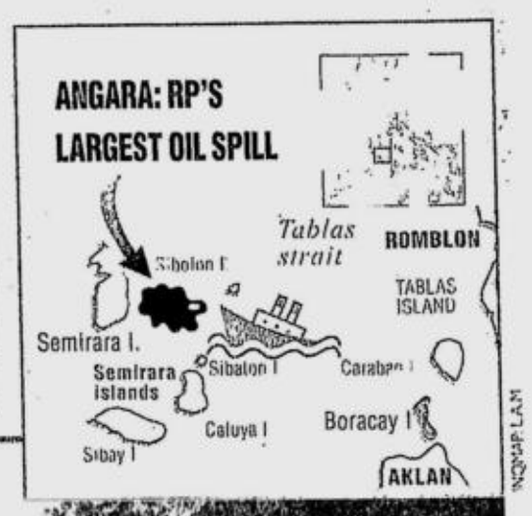
Friday, February 3, 2006 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 57 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Largest US pension fund upgrades RP invest rating

THE PHILIPPINES POSTED ITS HIGHEST SCORE ever in the annual assessment of investment destinations by CalPERS, the largest US pension fund and a recognized global leader in the investment industry, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) reported yesterday.

The country placed 14th, up from last year's 18th place ranking, in a field of 27 countries that were ranked by CalPERS (California Public Em-

LARGEST/ A4



Massive oil spill threatens white Boracay beaches

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/OFFICE OF SEN. PIA CAYETANO

PRIMITIVE WAY of cleaning up heavy crude oil is expected to last for three months manually done by 250 workers. So far, 17,000 sacks of contaminated materials have been collected. Napocor cites lack of equipment and personnel for the delay.

By Philip C. Tubeza

A MASSIVE OIL SPILL CAUSED by a National Power Corp. barge last December is threatening the world-famous Boracay island resort, senators said yesterday.

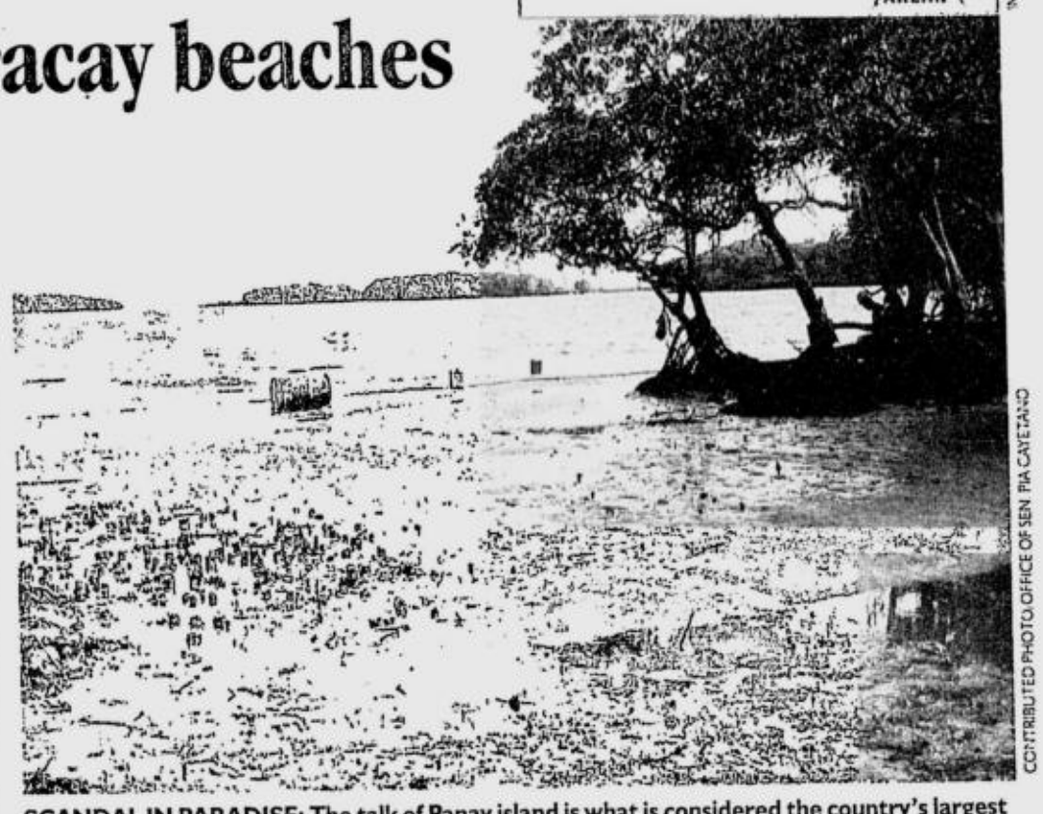
Senators Edgardo Angara and Miriam Defensor-Santiago called on Napocor to speed up its cleanup of the oil spill, noting that it had been more than a month since bunker fuel spilled from a Napocor power barge on Dec. 18.

Angara said the spill occurred only 10 km from Boracay.

"UP scientists say that there is a possibility that it might have long-term adverse consequences on Boracay waters," Santiago said.

"Napocor should speed up the cleanup of the oil spill and compensate those who were affected,"

MASSIVE/ A14



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO/OFFICE OF SEN. PIA CAYETANO

SCANDAL IN PARADISE: The talk of Panay island is what is considered the country's largest oil spill ever. A Napocor barge spilled reportedly 195,000 liters of bunker fuel last Dec. 18 off the shores of Semirara, only 10 km from the white beaches of Boracay.

30% kickback for solons

AFP grills 5 Faeldon supporters

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE MILITARY'S INTERNAL SPY unit has mounted a crackdown against suspected supporters of Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, eyeing soldiers involved in the failed July 27, 2003, Oakwood mutiny.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines Counter Intelligence Group (Afpcig) is interrogating five soldiers suspected of having helped the "Magdalo" leader enter military camps in a show of defiance during the 44 days he was on the loose.

Faeldon escaped last December after a hearing of the mutineers' case at a Makati city court. He was recaptured last Friday. Arrested with Faeldon was Capt. Candelaria Rivas, who was the spokesperson of the mutiny court-martial.

More soldiers are set to be brought in for "debriefing," said Col. Tristan Kison, a military spokesperson.

"We're looking at the extent of

AFP/ A14

RAFFY LERMA

CONFESSED broker of agri funds Jose Barredo details who got what, how and what for.

RAFFY LERMA

GOOD TO LAST CENTAVO: Farmers at the Senate hearing donate to the reward money put up by Sen. Ramon Magsaysay for any info leading to the arrest of Bolante.

SC nullifies Meralco's 13.27¢/kWh hike in '04

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERday declared null and void the 13.27-centavo per kilowatt-hour increase in generation charge that the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) granted Manila Electric Co. in 2004 because the company did not notify customers about the rate increase.

The high court also ordered that the ERC decision approving the increase in Meralco's rate from P3.1886 per kWh to P3.3213 per kWh be "immediately" set aside "for having been issued with grave abuse of discretion."

The decision was silent on whether Meralco customers would get a refund.

The ruling penned by Associate Justice Romeo Callejo was approved unanimously by all 14 justices, with Associate Justice Dante Tinga filing a separate concurring opinion on the case.

The tribunal ruled against the ERC and Meralco for their failure to publish Meralco's application for a rate increase in newspapers of general circulation.

"The lack of publication of respondent Meralco's amended application for the increase of its generation charge is ... fatal. By this omission, the consumers were deprived of the right to file their comments thereon," the high court said.

The Supreme Court said due process required "that the consumers be notified of any application, and be apprised of its contents, that would result in compounding their economic burden.

SC NULLIFIES/ A14

Fertilizer fund scam detailed in Senate

By TJ Burgonio

A BROKER FOR A VIRtually unknown medical supplier yesterday exposed an alleged conspiracy between Department of Agriculture officials and local politicians to skim off the DA fund for liquid fertilizer.

Testifying at the Senate inquiry into the P728-million fertilizer fund scam, Jose Barredo Jr. said he met with congressmen, governors and mayors in their homes to persuade them to avail themselves of the DA fund by dangling an offer—a 30-percent commission.

The fertilizer fund was said to have been used to ensure the victory of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the May 2004 elections.

In a clear, candid testimony, Barredo rattled off the names of the officials who allegedly took hefty commissions and even dictated the amounts they should receive.

He said that at times, he personally delivered to some of them the commissions and the liquid fertilizer, some of which was diluted and overpriced.

The officials mentioned by Barredo included Representatives Monico Puentevella (Ba-

30% KICKBACK/ A6

Antipregnancy pill making a comeback

By Christian V. Esguerra

APPARENTLY TAKING ADVANtage of the scheduled pullout of foreign-donated family planning products next year, the manufacturer of an old, plant-based antipregnancy pill is making a comeback in the Philippine market.

And it's a pill that will not only prevent unwanted pregnancies but also reduce menstrual pain and cure acne, according to the manufacturer.

Desogestrel, whose main ingredient is derived from the roots of a Mexican wild yam, is targeted at the female population (48.1 percent) that, according to the National Demographic and

ANTIPREGNANCY/ A6

REENGAGING A POWERHOUSE

RP rolling out red carpet for Indian president

By Leticia Ramos-Shanani

(Editor's Note: The author, a senator for three terms, was chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations. Before her election to the Senate, she was United Nations assistant secretary general for social development and humanitarian affairs. She also served at various times as Philippine ambassador to Australia, Romania, Hungary and West Germany. She is the widow of Ranjee Shahani, Indian writer and professor.)

COMMENTARY

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT is rolling out the red carpet today for a distinguished figure in the world political stage—Indian President Abdul Kalam. A heroic space scientist, nationalist, Muslim, inspiration to young minds, vegetarian and celibate, Kalam is visiting the country upon the invitation of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In 1998, Kalam said: "India has stood too long in the line of developing countries." Along with other Indian leaders, Kalam has predicted that India will join the ranks of developed countries by

RP ROLLING OUT/ A4

Soon on sale: 1-kg LPG with built-in burner

By Abigail L. Ho

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS OF THE P30, P60 and P115 cell phone loads, households may soon be able to buy liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for roughly the same amounts.

Riding on the popularity of sachet marketing, the Department of Energy (DOE) is urging liquefied petroleum gas suppliers to offer cooking gas in tanks with capacities of as little as 1 kilogram.

The 1-kg LPG tanks will be similar to the 2.5- and 2.7-kg tanks that are already available in the market.

Two firms—DJ Safe Gas and Powertech Asia Pacific Inc.—have expressed their intention to offer 1-kg LPG tanks, which will likely be priced at a little more than P60, said Zenaida Monsada, DOE oil industry management bureau director.

Unlike the conventional 11-kg cylinders that are connected to gas ranges via a hose, the 1-kg cylinders

SOON/ A14

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2006

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Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol and Quezon will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms, which will be frequent over E. Mindanao. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/02/03/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Cartel blamed for high sugar prices

By Gil Cabacungan

AN ALARMED MALACAÑANG IS MOVING TO BREAK WHAT IT believes is an emerging cartel in the sugar industry taking advantage of global shortage to push up prices.

"We believe the surge in sugar prices is artificial and driven by hoarders belonging to a new cartel," Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban disclosed yesterday. "We saw a lot of bids made for local sugar stocks but we never saw them sold in stores."

Panganiban said there was no reason for the price of sugar to "spike up" in recent days because there was sufficient supply in the market. He did not identify the members of the alleged cartel.

Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila outlined one of the steps the administration has taken to break the group's stranglehold on sugar supplies.

He said that Sugar Regulatory Administration head James Ledesma had agreed to open up the bidding of local sugar to small players that have been shut out by the "big boys" who maneuver to control the market with their bulk purchases of 10,000 bags during auctions.

Sugar is traditionally packed in 50-kilo bags. From an average of P780 per bag last year, the price of sugar has rocketed by 80 percent to roughly P1,400 per bag last week.

"We will try to eliminate this discriminatory bidding which Ledesma admitted to me is the reason for the layers and layers of margins enjoyed by numerous middlemen involved in bringing sugar to consumers," said Favila.

Favila said that allowing small players who could bid for at most 50 bags should counterbalance the big boys.

"A small trader told me all the bags he bought were immediately released and snapped up in the market at modest margins," Favila said. "With their big money, the big boys can control the market and induce a shortage even when there is none."

Expanding the number of bidders in the sugar auction complements the importation of 50,000 metric tons of duty-free sugar approved by President Macapagal-Arroyo, according to Favila.

"We expect to smoke out the hoarded supply with these imports," said Favila.

Businessman and consumer advocate Raul T. Concepcion urged the government to tighten up monitoring of the market, warning that sugar prices could prove to be as volatile as prices of crude oil.

Concepcion said several reasons were behind the global squeeze on sugar supply.

He said Europe had cut subsidies on its sugar exports, earmarked all sugar and corn exports for the production of ethanol (a fuel alternative) and limited sugar production for its domestic requirements.

In addition, he said, Turkey had reduced the land area devoted to the planting of sugar and corn; US President George W. Bush had announced that he planned to allocate a large portion of corn produced in the United States to the making of ethanol; and Thailand planned to cut exports because of drought.

Concepcion noted that these had driven up the world market price of sugar, from 14 US cents per pund (equivalent to P1, 000 per 50-kg bag at duty-free rates) at the start of this year to 18 cents per pound (or P1,200 per 50-kg).

However, the Department of Agriculture has reported that as of Jan. 26, the country was producing raw sugar at the rate of 91,345 metric tons a week, which was more than twice consumption of 41,553 metric tons a week.

Army 'butcher' savors Reds' supreme 'compliment'

By Cecil Morella
Agence France-Presse

LIKE A SNIPER TRACKING A TARget, the controversial Philippine Army general scans the communist guerrilla newspaper and smiles in quiet satisfaction when he nails it on page three.

"Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan," the furious editorial ranted. "Death Squads and vigilante groups... gruesome murders."

To the 55 year-old general, being singled out by the New People's Army (NPA) publication "Ang Bayan" (The People) is a supreme compliment.

The 37-year-old insurgency, he says, is "more of a psychological war. The military effort is about 20-30 percent only."

Palparan is one of the military's brightest stars in the battle. After smashing communist shadow governments in Samar and Mindoro, the slight, wiry father of three with an intense, withering stare was sent last year to lead the 7th Infantry Division in the Central Luzon plains, birthplace of the Maoist rebellion.

But Palparan, who studied to become a lawyer before earning a direct commission into the military officer corps 33 years ago, has also drawn condemnation from human rights monitors who invariably call him a "butcher." Such allegations do no perturb Palparan, an uncompromising general who believes tough tactics would yield a quick victory.

PALPARAN

To crush the 8,000-member NPA, "one to two years is more than enough, because the enemy is not strong," he tells AFP in an interview.

"Our forces and the resources are more than enough if they are utilized properly," he says, stressing that President Macapagal-Arroyo's government must have the will, and the public be prepared to accept "collateral damage" from an all-out offensive.

The government must "confront them in all levels," he says. "They are better than us on the propaganda front... "We have to concentrate on (combating) the intelligence work of the enemy and reducing their support system."

To the general, the insurgency is directed by fringe leftist political parties that have gained 15 seats in the 235-seat House of Representatives through the so-called "party-list" system that came into effect in 2001.

"It is my belief that these members of party lists in Congress are providing the day-to-day policies of the (rebel) movement," he says.

Palparan says the rebel network also includes hundreds—possibly thousands—of outwardly legal "non-government organizations" (NGOs) infiltrated or directed by the NPA's mother group, the Communist Party of the Philippines, that "provides the materials, the shelter" for the NPA.

"We need to strengthen our legal offensive" against this network, he says, while warning that an effective counter-insurgency campaign will necessarily be messy and "there would be things that would hurt our people."

Noli: I don't owe MGB crew anything

By Cynthia D. Balana
and Michael Lim Ubac

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO said yesterday he was what he is today because of his long years of perseverance, hard work and public service – and his voice.

De Castro was reacting to the statements made by former employees of Bayan Productions, which had produced the Magandang Gabi Bayan news magazine that made De Castro a media star and a household name.

The employees filed a case against Bayan Productions, which is headed by De Castro's wife Arlene, for alleged nonpayment of salaries and other benefits after Magandang Gabi Bayan folded up in December when its contract was not renewed by the ABS-CBN television network over which it had aired for 18 years.

"What do they mean that if not for them I would not be here, that they put the words in my mouth? I edited the scripts because if I followed what they wrote, MGB might not have rated," De Castro told the INQUIRER in Filipino yesterday.

"I was very hurt because they were paid for their work. Why should they get mad at me for the loss of MGB when it did not belong to me but was registered under ABS-CBN. Everything must come to an end. We should be grateful MGB lasted 18 years," he said.

De Castro said he had already made a name for himself as a co-anchor on TV Patrol and as host of the "Kabayan" radio program on dzMM before he went on MGB.

"TV Patrol had higher ratings than MGB, which came later. How could they say that I owe to them what I am now?" he said.

De Castro stressed that all MGB employees, including himself, were only talents of MGB and were paid on a per-program basis.

He said MGB'S budget had come from ABS-CBN through Bayan Productions every week and the MGB talents received their talent fees twice a month.

He said he was never a regular employee of ABS-CBN except when he was made vice president for radio two years before he ran for senator.

"When I became VP for radio, that was the only time I became a regular employee but that was only for two years. They did not take away my talent fee after that but when I became a senator I forfeited that," he said.

De Castro said that his wife had been negotiating with ABS-CBN to retain the MGB staff, but since the disgruntled employees included the owners and officials of the network as respondents in the case, this was now impossible.

On the workers' claim that they were regular employees because they made contributions to the Social Security System and Pag-Ibig Fund and they received a regular rice subsidy, De Castro said these all came from Bayan Productions, not ABS-CBN.

"Having SSS and Pag-Ibig does not make you a regular employee. They should be grateful to us for paying for that, including their rice. They were the envy of other ABS-CBN employees because they had such benefits even if they were only talents. They said they had to sell the appliances we gave them last Christmas. Well, those were gifts. It's a good thing they were able to turn them into cash. I was really hurt because some of them were my godchildren," he said.

Legal agency vs mutineers

PROMPTED BY THE DARING EScape of some junior officers who are on trial for the Oakwood mutiny, President Macapagal-Arroyo has created a new legal action group that will help coordinate the investigation and prosecution of cases relating to national security.

The President signed last Jan. 17 Executive Order 493 creating the Inter-agency Legal Action Group (IALAG) and gave it an initial funding of P50 million.

The IALAG is to address specific offenses "that constitute threats to national security, including but not limited to cases of rebellion, sedition and related offenses."

It will also cover "national interest cases that threaten national security."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the provision of funds would help the expeditious prosecution of such cases.

"We are giving the agencies involved in prosecuting these cases the wherewithal to be able to successfully prosecute these cases," he said.

He said the new agency "should not be misunderstood to go witch-hunting for evidence against anybody or the opposition who are trying to destabilize the government." *Christine Avendaño*

No reason to quit, says PCGG chief

By Alcuin Papa

AN ADAMANT PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION on Good Government (PCGG) chair Camilo Sabio yesterday brushed aside calls for his resignation, after he had irked some senators by refusing to answer questions on a reported compromise on the coconut levy fund.

Sabio said he was simply following President Macapagal-Arroyo's marching orders with regard to the coco levy fund, which was to make sure the law was followed and that whatever deal was hammered out was not disadvantageous to the government.

"There is no reason to resign," said Sabio, when asked his reaction to the call made by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, among other legislators.

Sabio had earlier said that if nothing happened with the coco levy case by the end of the year, he would resign from the PCGG.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, however, said the other day that Sabio was acting on his own when he began negotiations on a compromise between the coconut farmers and businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

At stake is 20 percent of San Miguel Corp., the country's largest food and beverage conglomerate, which Cojuangco and the farmers are contesting.

When asked if he felt Malacañang had left him twisting in the wind with Ermita's statement, Sabio cryptically answered in a text message: "I am deeply grateful for the trust the President has (given) me."

When pressed if the Palace had instructed him to negotiate a compromise, Sabio sent another text: "I have repeatedly said I have not yet seen any compromise agreement."

Early this week, Sabio refused to answer questions posed by Senators Enrile and Joker Arroyo on whether or not Malacañang had approved negotiations on a compromise on the coco levy, and other questions related to some PCGG-sequestered companies.

Sabio invoked Executive Order No. 1 issued by President Corazon Aquino in 1986 which created the PCGG. Section 4 of the EO says no PCGG official would be required to testify in any judicial, legislative or administrative proceeding concerning matters within its "official cognizance."

On Wednesday, Sabio said one reason for his refusal to answer the senators' questions was the earlier involvement of Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senators Enrile and Edgardo Angara in the coco levy cases.

Drilon said Sabio was using "squid tactics" when he brought up the senators' involvement in the coco levy fund issue as lawyers during the Marcos administration.

For his part, Arroyo said Sabio should resign his positions as chair or officer in charge of 29 government-sequestered corporations, 14 of them formerly controlled by Cojuangco, since these posts were in conflict with his job at PCGG.

"It is downright untenable and deplorable. As PCGG chair, he is pursuing these sequestered corporations for ill-gotten monies. Yet, he chairs the same sequestered corporations that he is going after," Arroyo said.

"How can he live with that arrangement? Of being the accuser as PCGG chair and defender as the sequestered corporation chair? By hanging on to them like nails, he erodes the credibility of the PCGG," he said. *With Philip C. Tubeza*

Davide backs poll automation – Abalos

By Jerome Aning

RETIRED SUPREME COURT Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. met yesterday with top officials of the Commission on Elections in his new capacity as presidential adviser on electoral reform, and vowed to support the agency's efforts to automate the 2007 midterm elections, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said.

"He asked a lot of questions and he was very reactive," Abalos told reporters.

He said the meeting, which lasted about two-and-a-half hours, focused on the automation of next year's elections as mandated by Republic Act No. 8436.

Abalos said he and his colleagues looked forward to meeting with Davide more frequently so that he could act as Comelec's conduit with Malacañang and Congress.

Commissioners Resurreccion Borra, Florentino Tuason Jr. and Romeo Brawner attended the meeting. Comelec has been reduced to four members following the expiration yesterday of the seven-year terms of Commissioners Mehol Sadain and Rufino Javier.

Abalos said he reiterated to Davide Comelec's determination to pursue "all possible avenues" to secure authorization to use the automated counting machines it had purchased for the 2004 national and local elections.

The P1.3-billion deal was annulled by the Supreme Court two years ago due to bidding irregularities. Davide, who was then the chief justice, dissented from the majority decision, saying that there was no suggestion that graft and corruption attended the bidding process or that the contract price was excessive or unreasonable.

Abalos said Davide expressed his "full support" for the Comelec's commitment to automate the 2007 elections as mandated by law, but advised that alternative plans should also be drawn up.

One of the alternatives discussed at the meeting were the electronic voting machines demonstrated by visiting Indian election officials last week.

"The machines are very robustly designed and built, as well as easy to operate," Abalos said. "Their simplicity would probably shorten the time needed to prepare for their introduction into the Philippine electoral system."

Misuari wants case remanded to DOJ for probe

By Tarra V. Quismundo

SAYING HIS CLIENTS HAD LONG BEEN DENIED DUE process, the lawyer of jailed Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari and seven of his alleged accomplices has asked a Makati court to suspend their trial and remand the rebellion case to the Department of Justice for preliminary investigation.

In a motion filed last Wednesday, lawyer Arthur Lim told the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 138 that Misuari and his co-accused were "entering their fifth year of incarceration pending trial without benefit of a preliminary investigation... thereby denying them their basic right which, though not a constitutional right in nature, is nonetheless a component of due process in criminal justice."

Misuari and co-accused Ustadz Abuharis Usman are currently at the St. Luke's Medical Center, where the court allowed them to undergo thorough medical examinations. They were released last Saturday from Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna for a 10-day medical furlough.

In his motion, Lim said that a reinvestigation ordered two years ago by then Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong never pushed through. He said a reinvestigation would allow his clients to submit a counter-affidavit to the rebellion charges.

On Dec. 3, 2003, Datumanong issued a resolution ordering a reinvestigation of the rebellion charge, which arose from an uprising in Jolo in 2001 in which about 100 people were killed.

"Regrettably, the resolution has not been implemented despite the fact that the same has not been stayed, appealed, nor nullified [by the Court], and remains valid up to this date," said Lim.

State Prosecutor Peter Ong opposed the motion and asked the court yesterday to deny the petition "for not only being dilatory, but for utter lack of merit."

"When the resolution of then Secretary Datumanong was issued, the case was already on trial. Thus, [Datumanong's] order for reinvestigation of this case after the accused have been arraigned, [with] the pre-trial terminated, was unprocedural," said Ong.

Erap eye surgery a 'success'

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

DOCTORS HAVE PRONOUNCED DEPOSED President Estrada's eye surgery "successful" but said he has to remain in hospital for three more days so they can "monitor his recovery".

"We are hoping and praying that he will be allowed to stay at the hospital for a few more days. We hope the Sandiganbayan will be more compassionate and more humane," said San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, one of Estrada's sons.

The Sandiganbayan anti-graft court allowed Estrada, who is under "rest house arrest" on plunder charges, to check into the San Juan Medical Center for treatment last Tuesday after he complained of blurred vision and headaches.

His doctors said he was suffering from an eye infection caused by an insect bite. But he also needed surgery to remove excess eyelid skin that was affecting his vision, they said.

His family decided to push through with the surgery the other night.

"We decided on our own to go on with the operation with or without a court order. President Estrada's health is at stake here. We hope the Sandiganbayan will understand," Ejercito said.

The surgery lasted more than two hours, from 10 p.m. of Wednesday to 12:15 a.m. yesterday.

Estrada was conscious during the surgery and was only just slightly sedated, said his personal physician, Dr. Lorenzo Hocson.

"The operation was very successful. He is now recovering well," Hocson said.

He said Estrada was already "in high spirits" yesterday and was even planning to "offer a thanksgiving Mass."

Aside from treating the infection in his right eye, the doctors also removed the excess skin in both eyelids.

They also found cysts in the lower lid of his left eye but they chose not to remove them to avoid risking more infection.

Largest US pension fund . . .

From page A1

ployees' Retirement System) in its 2006 Permissible Markets List, the DFA said, quoting a report from the Philippine Embassy in Washington.

Its latest score of 2.13—from last year's 2.00—given by CalPERS' consulting firm Wilshire Associates, improved the country's standing compared with other emerging markets, particularly Malaysia, China, Russia and India, according to Ambassador Albert del Rosario.

Investments in SMC, PLDT

Last year, CalPERS had $172 billion in assets, of which an estimated $85 million was invested in Philippine companies like San Miguel Corp. and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

It had approximately $3.9 billion invested in emerging markets as of February 2005. The pension fund provides retirement and health benefits to 1.4 million state and local public employees and their families in California.

Del Rosario attributed the country's "remarkable performance" to the reduction in its fiscal deficit, the passage and implementation of the expanded value-added tax law, and "advances in the country's battle against corruption."

Brownie points & GMA

The diplomat said CalPERS' decision "reflects strong confidence in the Philippines and in the reform drive of the government."

But he was also quick to translate all these into political brownie points for the embattled Arroyo administration.

"(This) is a clear indication that the international business community recognizes the President's economic reform efforts and the achievements made toward this end," Del Rosario said in the DFA statement.

The economy continues to make significant strides under Ms Arroyo's leadership "despite recent political controversies."

"The peso was the best performing currency in 2005 [in Asia]. Foreign investment in the Philippines has remained robust. Our equities market was the best performer in Southeast Asia. Our inflation is still single digit despite soaring oil prices," the ambassador noted.

Volt Contreras

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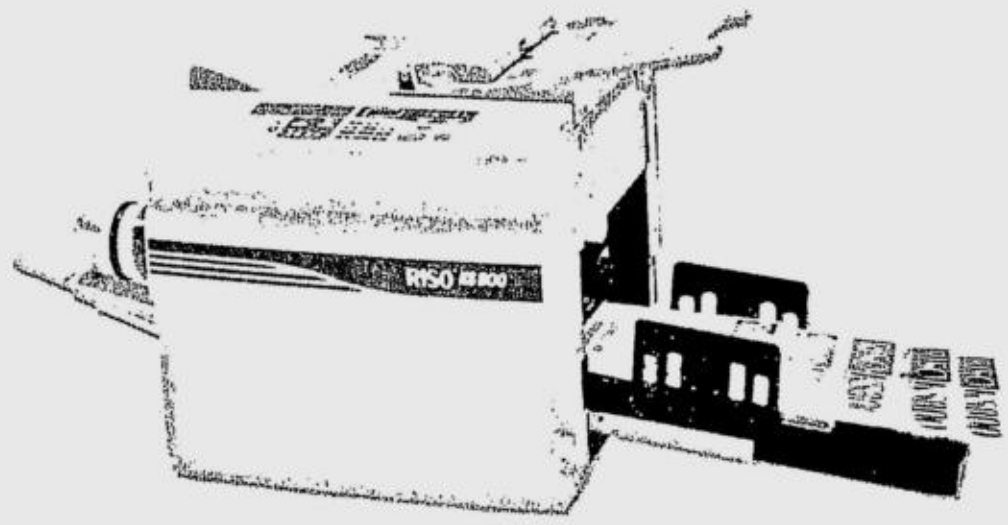

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RP rolling out red carpet for Indian president

From page A1

2020. Not an Asian tiger but a steady elephant, India has emerged as one of the world's top 10 economies, which is touted to become the third largest in 30 years, the first one being China.

Filipinos will have to shake off from their minds the stereotype they have of India—land of the "Bombays," the local catchall term for Indians. Filipinos knew them as security guards and ambulant vendors of mosquito nets during pre-war Manila. More recently, Indians have become known as usurious moneylenders who have positioned themselves in all corners of the archipelago.

But India should also cast aside its Cold War hang-up about the Philippines as a permanent US colony, excluded from India's "civilization neighbors" in Southeast Asia. India used to dismiss Asean as a "Coca-Cola Club" but now anxiously wants to be part of the regional grouping.

India is becoming a global knowledge hub with a central place in the transnational movement of knowledge and services. It is also a magnet for foreign investors in the field of IT and manufacturing as well as biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. The vitality of its 1.2 billion people—half of which is below 35—lies in the fact that 60 percent of them are literate, many of them English-speaking.

Is the Philippines ready to reengage this powerhouse?

Delicious food

Recently, former President Fidel V. Ramos headed a trade delegation to Mumbai, Kolkata and New Delhi. Members of the delegation were interested in information technology, educational exchange, pharmaceuticals, films, jewelry and herbal medicines. They were enthusiastic about the wide range of contacts they made and the easy communication with Indians, who speak English. Trade and investment between the Philippines and India, however, remain below potential.

A member of the Ramos delegation said he found Indian food just too spicy even at five-star hotels. He ended up eating at McDonalds. But Indian food can be delicious and does not always have to be hot; Larry Cruz, Filipino owner of Bollywood Restaurant in Makati, has proven this.

In Mumbai, the focal point of the Ramos visit was the Birla group which made the first major Indian investment in the Philippines in 1975. The late Aditya Birla, a visionary industrialist, served as honorary consul of the Philippines in Mumbai and his widow, Rajashree, has taken over the position

Language bond

The Birlas have generously helped the Philippines in consular matters over the years, a fact acknowledged by the Philippine government which took the unprecedented step of awarding posthumously the Sikatuna Award, normally given to ambassadors, to the late A. Birla.

The English language is another bond that Filipinos share with Indians. A great number of modern Indians and Filipinos are able to communicate in a way other Asians can't. It is the two million nonresident Indians (NRIs) in the United States who helped build Silicon Valley and made America's IT industry reach new heights. The NRIs play a role in forging closer relations between India and the United States.

Filipinos and Indians are discovering each other in the field of services retailing to information technology. Some Indian companies have already set up call centers in the Philippines. Another area of collaboration is in the "nonvoice" business processing outsourcing, which deals with medical, legal, financial, banking and accounting services.

Significantly, Filipino animators have found work in Bangalore. But Filipinos must work hard at keeping educational norms high, especially in the engineering and scientific fields.

Filipinos' proficiency in English must be world-class. Creativeness and meritocracy should rule; corruption and political patronage must be rooted out if Filipinos are to survive and go beyond becoming domestic helpers in the IT sector for we must also create software.

Asia's 2 oldest democracies

But Philippine relations with India are not based solely on commercial considerations, however important these are. The Philippines and India are the two oldest post-colonial democracies in Asia. However imperfect their systems might be, the fact that the Philippines and India have democratic institutions in place is an important bond in a region where freedom, justice and human dignity are sacrificed for economic gains.

One of the most encouraging features of people-to-people contact between our two countries is the rich dialogue and constant exchange between Indian and Filipino NGOs in diverse areas such as socioeconomic issues, women's rights and spiritual values.

Nuclear power

If a country develops economic power, its military might also grows. India is a military and nuclear power. When the military issue is raised with Indian friends, they readily answer that India is peace-loving and, like in ancient times, will not seek to subjugate its neighbors.

However, as Amartya Sen and Stephen Cohen have said in their writings, the nuclear debate is a real one in India. There are those who see India's nuclear capability as a needed deterrent to threats; others see it as a futile exercise in the search for security.

Nuclear tensions on the Indian subcontinent are far away from where we are in the Pacific. Even so, Filipinos whose history has been one of invasion, conquest and occupation by stronger military powers, hope that India will live in peace with its neighbors and share prosperity equitably.

Filipinos and Indians must reengage each other in the 21st century under new and fresh conditions.

Welcome and *mabuhay*, President Kalam! The 21st century is an Asian century! *Gising na, bayan!*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, February 3, 2006
4th Week in Ordinary Time
Blasé / Ansgar

1st Reading: Sir 47:2-11
Gospel: Mark 6:14-29

King Herod also heard about Jesus because his name had become well-known. Some people said, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him." Others thought, "He is Elijah," and others, "He is a prophet like the prophets of times past." When Herod was told of this, he thought: "I had John beheaded, yet he has risen from the dead!"

For this is what had happened. Herod had ordered John to be arrested and had him bound and put in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. Herod had married her and John had told him, "It is not right for you to live with your brother's wife." So Herodias held a grudge against John and wanted to kill him, but she could not because Herod respected John. He knew John to be an upright and holy man and kept him safe. And he liked listening to him, although he became very disturbed whenever he heard him.

Herodias had her chance on Herod's birthday, when he gave a dinner for all the senior government officials, military chiefs and the leaders of Galilee. On that occasion the daughter of Herodias came in and danced; and she delighted Herod and his guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want and I will give it to you." And he went so far as to say with many oaths, "I will give you anything you ask, even half my kingdom." She went out to consult her mother, "What shall I ask for?" The mother replied, "The head of John the Baptist." The girl hurried to the king and made her request: "I want you to give me the head of John the Baptist, here and now, on a dish."

The king was very displeased, but he would not refuse in front of his guests because of his oaths. So he sent one of the bodyguards with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded John in prison; then he brought the head on a dish and gave it to the girl. And the girl gave it to her mother. When John's disciples heard of this, they came and took his body and buried it.

Commentary

The praises of David are sung, telling both of his sins forgiven and his praises of God. And in Mark we hear the story of John the Baptizer imprisoned for telling the truth to Herod and how Philip's wife, Herodias plots to kill him because he accused them of murder and unfaithfulness. And she waits for her chance and has John beheaded at a dinner party. Now Jesus arises among the people and there are echoes of the prophets of old like Elijah and John the Baptist, with the people wondering who Jesus might actually be.

Who are the prophets among us? Do we listen and look, and seek the Word of the Lord in those who speak out against injustice?

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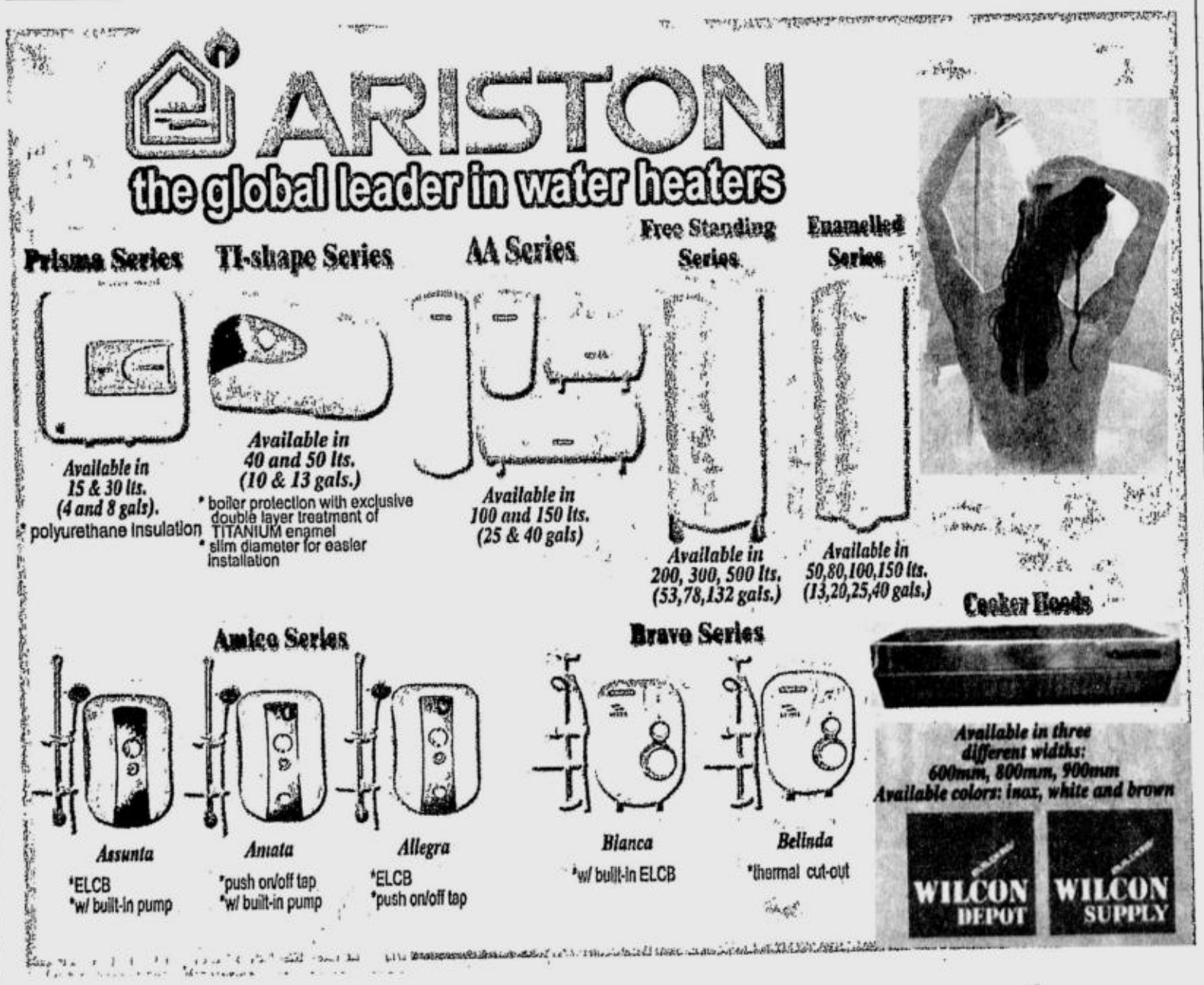

Filipino seamen losing out to automation, competition

GREATER AUTOMATION ABOARD SHIPS and competition from Asian neighbors are cutting into demand for the Filipinos who make up 20 percent of the sailors in the global shipping industry, the International Labor Organization said yesterday.

The current shipbuilding boom has created strong demand for officers worldwide, the ILO said, but the trend toward automated vessels with smaller crews has reduced the need for lower-skilled seafarers, known as ratings.

"As today's ships become more specialized and automated, the required skills mix has changed," the ILO said in a statement. "Demand for skilled deck officers and engineers continues to rise, while slimmer crews means the need for lesser skilled ratings is dropping."

A December report by the Baltic and International Maritime Council estimated a worldwide shortage of 10,000 qualified officers and a surplus of 135,000 ratings, the ILO said.

Aside from shrinking overall demand, less-skilled Filipino sailors are facing competition from Asian neighbors like China, India, Myanmar and Vietnam, just as Filipinos squeezed out their European and American counterparts in the past, the ILO said.

The labor body said the benchmark monthly wage for Filipino ratings is $1,400, while sailors from other Asian countries are accepting jobs for as low as $500 to $700.

Some ship owners also are increasingly imposing age restrictions—sometimes as low as 40 years, it said.

But the ILO quoted shipping industry and labor executives as saying many ship owners still prefer Filipino crewmen because they speak English, are Western-oriented and "flexible and have a caring attitude."

The labor body said it is now crafting a new Maritime Labor Convention to reflect the needs of a globalized shipping industry. If adopted, it will consolidate and update more than 65 international labor standards. *AP*

Appeals court asked to clear backlog of cases

By Armand N. Nocum

THE NEW PRESIDING JUSTICE OF THE Court of Appeals, Ruben T. Reyes, has asked the CA justices to clear the backlog of cases in their sala, saying that no real justice is attained when cases are delayed.

Reyes said he wanted to make the CA "righteous and reasonable in its decisions and resolutions, and responsible and responsive to the challenge of judicial service."

"First and foremost, we will address very earnestly the matter of eliminating the backlog in cases," Reyes said in an interview.

He said the appellate court, which receives an average of 8,049 cases a year, would be giving priority to cases that are more than a year old from the date of submission.

As of Jan. 2, he said there were only 54 cases dating back to 1999 and beyond.

Reyes said he would issue an order today that the 54 cases be decided in 60 days and after that, within the next 10 months, from March to December.

"Our target is to decide all appealed cases from 2000 to 2004," he said.

Since he himself has a "zero backlog" in his sala, Reyes said he would volunteer to work on some of the older cases.

The CA presiding justice said there were only a total of 10,000 pending cases before the appellate court, which was founded 70 years ago. He said the court has resolved 14,000 of the 13,000 new cases filed last year.

"So by December, we can easily dispatch the 10,000 [pending] cases this year so that the 10,000 to 12,000 cases that we will receive this year will all be current cases next year, no more backlog," he said.

The court considers as backlog cases those that have remained undecided for more than one year from the date of submission.

Reyes, who was appointed in December, said CA justices have managed to reduce to an average of two years the time needed for cases to be resolved—a marked improvement from the 15 to 20 years that it used to take the CA to decide cases.

However, he foresees a drastic increase in the number of cases to be handled by the court now that the Supreme Court has thrown to the CA all appealed administrative cases filed before the Office of the Ombudsman.

"The Supreme Court declared that all these appeals or petitions for review from the [Ombudsman] should be brought to the CA first and from there to the high court," he said.

Top soldiers of '05 picked

THREE EXEMPLARY SOLDIERS FROM EACH OF the three branches of the armed forces and one from the technical services have been chosen The Outstanding Philippine Soldiers (TOPS) by the Metrobank Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of Metrobank, and its partner, the Rotary Club of Makati Metro.

Metrobank Foundation executive vice president and executive director Aniceto M. Sobrepeña said the 10 were selected from the Army, Navy and Air Force and one from the Technical Services of the military (medical corps, the corps of professors, and Judges Advocates Group office).

The winners are Maj. Hernanie S. Songano, Radarman Freddie E. Asence, Sgt. Rudy D. Espuelas, Col. Dacio-Teody R. Udal, Lt. Col. Arnulfo J. Marcos, Senior M/Sgt. Fidel A. Alegre, Jr., M/Sgt. Guillermo P. Francisco, Capt. Giemel O. Espino, S/Sgt. Irwin P. Parolma and T/Sgt. Larry A. Dacuray.

The 2005 TOPS awardees were selected by the final board of judges, chaired by Rep. Arthur Defensor, chair of the House committee on good governance and Supreme Court Associate Justice Dante O. Tinga, after a series of interviews held in November.

Other members of the final board of judges are former Labor Secretary Nieves R. Confesor; Far Eastern University president Dr. Lydia B. Echauz; 2004 Ramon Magsaysay Awardee for Emergent Leadership and Executive Coordinator of the Assisi Development Foundation Benjamin F. Abadiano and INQUIRER columnist Belinda Olivares-Cunanan.

30% kickback for solons, says witness

From page A1

colod City), Oscar Garin (Iloilo), Edgar Espinosa (Guimaras) and Reylina "Neneng" Nicolas (Bulacan); Governors Vicente Bermejo (Capiz) and Florencio Miraflores (Aklan), and Kalibo Mayor Reymar Rebaldo.

Some of the officials issued denials. *(See story at right.)*

Barredo said that between January and April 2004, he worked with one Maritess "Tess" Aytona, believed to be one of the owners of medical supplier Feshan Philippines Inc. and an "agent" of then Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Jocjoc" Bolante.

He said it was Aytona who took care of getting the required papers signed, and having the necessary funds as well as the commissions released.

Identifying himself as a broker of Feshan, Barredo said Aytona had claimed that the DA fund was being managed by Bolante, the alleged chief architect of the fertilizer fund program.

The Senate tried to serve a subpoena on Aytona at the Feshan office at 16 Sgt. Esguerra Ave., South Triangle, Quezon City, but found the place abandoned.

Overpricing

At the same hearing, Commission on Audit officials said the suppliers and nongovernment organizations that received a huge portion of the P728-million fund from the DA for eventual distribution to farmers' groups "overpriced" the cost of the fertilizer by millions of pesos.

Sorsogon Board Member Rebecca Aquino testified that the provincial government received P5 million from the DA and used it to purchase over 2,000 liters of Bio Nature Liquid Fertilizer.

BOLANTE: Have you seen this man?

She said the fertilizer—sold by local suppliers at between P180 and P350 per liter—was bought at the padded cost of P1,500 per liter from Feshan itself, and turned out to be inappropriate for rice and corn.

After the hearing, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. told reporters: "In effect, we have further strengthened the truth that the [DA] down to the RFU level had made use of the fund to commit such large-scale overpricing and under-delivery.

"If this is not reversed, we will continue to bleed, and our farmers will continue to be impoverished."

Magsaysay, chair of the investigating committee on agriculture and food, said it was up to the COA to pick up from where the committee had left off: "The COA itself can file cases."

But the senator said he was not keen on inviting the lawmakers mentioned by Barredo. He said the House of Representatives' committee on ethics should look into the broker's claims.

'SOP'

In his testimony, the bespectacled Barredo said he worked with Aytona on the sale of medicines to local government units from 1997 to 2003.

He said that in January 2004, Aytona invited him to work with her in the sale of liquid fertilizer to local officials, with the funds coming from the DA and the fertilizer to be purchased from Feshan.

Barredo named a Julie Gregorio as the president of Feshan, which, he said, had connections to Bolante and was authorized by the latter to supply fertilizer to local government units.

"She (Aytona) told me that funds from the DA would be given to the LGUs to buy the fertilizer. According to Tess, the fund is being managed by DA Usec Bolante," Barredo said, reading from a sworn affidavit.

Initially, Barredo said, he and Aytona met with Mayors Castillo and Pagdanganan of the Bulacan towns of Pulilan and Calumpit, respectively, and Bulacan Representative Nicolas to inform them they had funds ranging from P3 million to P6 million.

He said Nicolas "declined to accept the fertilizer, and decided to accept cash only."

"I learned that if the fund, for instance, was P3 million, the SOP (standard operating procedure or commission) would be P900,000 (30 percent of P3 million), and the rest would be used to buy fertilizer," he said.

For his work, Barredo said Aytona promised him P10,000 a month, plus 3-5 percent of the commission.

Demands

After his stint in Central Luzon, Barredo, being an Ilonggo, was instructed by Aytona to concentrate on Region 6.

There, he said, he made the same offer to officials who included Congressmen Puentevella, Garin and Espinosa, Governors Bermejo and Miraflores and Mayor Rebaldo.

He said Puentevella, who was allotted P5 million, accepted the offer, but insisted that only 25 percent be used to buy fertilizer and the rest be converted to cash.

"Tess Aytona was with me at that time," Barredo said.

Garin, who was allocated P5 million, also received a commission equivalent to 30 percent of the fund, Barredo said. He said Espinosa got a P3-million fund and a 30-percent "SOP."

Barredo said that when he and Aytona met with Bermejo at the Roxas capitol, the governor asked about the amount of the commission and was told that he would get 20 percent.

"The governor retorted that a supplier had given a 40-percent offer, and instructed Tess to call Usec Bolante. I saw and heard Governor Bermejo and Usec Bolante talk on the phone," Barredo said, adding that he eventually delivered the first tranche of the commission to the governor.

The one who rejected offer

Per Barredo's testimony:

- He visited Puentevella at the latter's home in Bacolod in April 2004 to present the memorandum of agreement, but the lawmaker signed it only a few days later.
- Miraflores did not sign the MOA until he received the P1.5-million commission a day before the May 2004 elections.
- Rebaldo did not agree to the initial offer of P600,000 in commissions and demanded more. The additional money was delivered.
- Iloilo Rep. Arthur Defensor did not accept his allocation from the DA but requested that this be distributed to Mayors Alex Centena of Calinog, Mayor Mario Malones of Maasin and Mayor Ramirez of Lambunao.

"Before the elections, we also met with Congressman Lacson, Congressman Maranon and Governor Maranon, but the release of their allocations did not push through after they switched sides and supported FPJ (Fernando Poe Jr., standard-bearer of the opposition)," Barredo said.

'Black propaganda,' says governor

"BLACK PROPAGANDA" WAS HOW Capiz Gov. Vicente Bermejo described the testimony of his fellow Capiceño Jose Barredo Jr. that he had received a 40-percent commission for the delivery of liquid fertilizer to his province.

Bermejo said he was ready to face the Senate if given a chance in order to clear his name. "We have supporting documents to prove that [the fertilizer] was distributed to farmers in Capiz, and [a] corresponding [Commission on Audit] report that [the project] was properly implemented," Bermejo said in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER yesterday.

The governor also belied allegations that the project was used for the 2004 election campaign, saying it was implemented in July 2004, or two months after the polls.

Former Aklan governor and now Rep. Florencio Miraflores also denied Barredo's allegation that he had received a P1.5-million commission.

"I'm really surprised that my name has been dragged into that controversy," he said in a phone interview.

Miraflores said he neither knew nor had heard of Barredo.

He said that while Aklan was a recipient of a fertilizer fund of P5 million, the project was implemented only in September 2004, when he was already a congressman.

In a separate phone interview, Kalibo Mayor Reymar Rebaldo also denied knowing Barredo.

"That is laughable. I do not recall meeting him," Rebaldo said.

Former Iloilo Rep. Oscar Garin likewise denied knowing Barredo or having met with him.

Garin said audit reports and a check with the recipients and suppliers would disprove Barredo's claims. *Reports from Connie E. Fernandez and Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Antipregnancy pill . . .

From page A1

Health Survey (NDHS) of 2003, prefers pills over other methods of contraception.

It is said to prevent pregnancy by keeping eggs from being released from the ovary, while thickening the cervical mucus to keep sperm out of the uterus.

The pill's manufacturer, Organon, has cut its retail price to P75 per strip from the original P252.50. The drastic reduction in price is expected to benefit the disadvantaged classes.

"By offering the product at a much lower price, Organon will help more women have more access to safe and reliable contraception," Francesca Ballmer, the company's Philippine general manager, said yesterday at a press conference.

Organon has shared head offices in the United States (New Jersey) and the Netherlands (Oss).

The move is expected to open the local market to companies producing popular contraceptives such as condoms and pills.

But despite the promises of Desogestrel, the manufacturer is bracing itself for strong opposition from the Catholic Church, which is firmly against artificial family planning methods.

"We fully respect the stand of the Catholic Church," Ballmer said. "Our opinion is that all Filipinos should have a fully informed choice and make their own decisions."

Promising market

Based on the Filipino pregnancy behaviors indicated in the NDHS, there is a promising market for producers of foreign contraceptives.

The survey says women aged between 25 and 49 have their first baby at the median age of 23.2, which is quite near the median age for their first sexual intercourse—22.8 in urban areas and 20.8 among the poor.

In a presentation, Organon medical adviser Dr. Sylvia Santos translated the supposed Philippine birth rate of 2.36 percent to four million Filipinos being born every year. (Pro-life advocates insist the birth rate is only 1.9 percent.)

Santos said pills were generally efficient in preventing pregnancy, with a failure rate of only 0.1 percent. The failure rate of condoms is 3 percent, and the withdrawal method 4 percent.

Margin of safety

Desogestrel was first introduced in 1981. Currently, it has four million users in more than 100 countries, Organon said.

It is taken on a 28-day regimen and has a margin of safety of 12 hours. That means it is still safe for the user to have sex within that period when she forgets to take the pill, according to Santos.

The pill is also skin-friendly, Santos said, citing a 1998 study claiming that "over 80 percent of pre-existing acne had disappeared after six cycles of treatment."

She said the same study showed a low incidence of side effects, such as nausea and headaches, among users.

Another study conducted in 1990 showed that the pill decreases the incidence of menstrual pain or dysmenorrhea, she added.

Santos disputed the allegation that pills were abortifacients, meaning they induced abortion.

Misconception

"It's a misconception and [a product of] misinformation," she said. "For abortion to occur, there must first be pregnancy. But as you can see, most of the pills today prevent ovulation. How can a pill be an abortifacient if there's no pregnancy?"

Santos also claimed that pills could reduce the incidence of ovarian and uterine cancer.

NAIA3 COMPENSATION

Palace: No settlement on Piatco

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG IS NOT INTERested in a settlement with Fraport AG because government lawyers are confident they could win the case filed by the German airport operator for compensation of its investment in Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila, the government's point man for Naia 3, said Fraport had to show proof of its investment in the terminal to the World Bank's International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in Washington D.C.

"The burden of proof is on them (Fraport). They claim they spent this much for Naia 3 so they should back this up with official records. I believe ICSID will want proof of their spending before judging on their just compensation," Favila said.

Fraport went to the World Bank to seek arbitration after the government expropriated the terminal whose contract was deemed to be riddled with irregularities by the Supreme Court.

FAVILA

Fraport claimed it spent more than $425 million to put up Naia 3 under a build-operate-and-transfer contract with Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco).

The deal was voided by the Supreme Court in 2003 and it ordered the government to compensate Piatco for its investment.

"We're going to pursue the case. We are confident that we will win. We're not interested in a compromise deal," Favila said yesterday following a briefing in Malacañang.

Last year, Fraport struck a deal with Manila Hotel to sell its stake in Naia 3 for $200 million. The deal collapsed the other day.

"Substantial roadblocks in reaching an agreement could not be removed," Fraport said in a statement on Wednesday.

Fraport said it would continue to pursue compensation for its holding in the terminal through the World Bank after the Philippine government had rejected Fraport's demand for $425 million in compensation.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld its earlier order for the government to pay an initial P3 billion ($57.6 million) to the Fraport-led consortium that built the terminal.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said ICSID should come out with its decision on the case by March or April.

Favila said the government, through the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa), is set to hire an independent assessor to appraise Naia 3.

Fraport said Wednesday it was confident it had a strong case for compensation at the World Bank.

With a Reuters report

IMPORTANT

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Airport passes to be limited

By Nikko Dizon

AIMING TO FURther "sanitize" and decongest the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) terminals, the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) has begun limiting the access area allowed for visitors' passes.

Robert Uy, head executive assistant of Miaa general manager Alfonso Cusi, said the airport authority recognizes the Filipino trait of giving a warm welcome or send off but "there are security and operational concerns that have to be taken into consideration."

In a memo dated Jan. 31, Cusi cited the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards as a basis for implementing the stricter rules.

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Manila Water

Water interruptions in portion of Makati and Mandaluyong needed to upgrade facilities

Manila Water is regularly upgrading its facilities to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. As part of the program, several large valve will be installed to upgrade the distribution lines. The first activity will affect portions of Makati due the installation of a large valve along Quingua and EDSA. The interruption will start 10:00 pm, Saturday, February 4, up to 6:00 am, February 5. The following areas will be affected:Bgy. Pitogo, South Cembo, Cembo, Pinagkaisahan, Guadalupe Nuevo, Guadalupe.Viejo, Bel Air 1-4, Urdaneta Village, Salcedo Village, Legaspi Village, San Lorenzo, Pio del Pilar, San Antonio , Sta. Cruz, San Miguel Village, Poblacion, Pasong Tamo, Dasmarinas Village and Makati Central Business District.

Meanwhile, the second interruption will occur in Mandaluyong due to the installation of another large valve this time along A. Mabini and Wilson. The interruption will start 10:00 pm, Tuesday, February 7, up to 6:00 am, February 8 and will affect the following portion of Bgy. Valencia and Santolan Road, Little Baguio, Addition Hills, Bgy. Pasadena, Paterno, Isabelita, Onse, St. Joseph and Maytunas.

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

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(PDI - Feb 3, 2006)

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bush 'State' speech greeted by doubts

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT George W. Bush's new appeal for greater democracy in the Middle East and efforts to make drastic cuts in oil imports from the region was greeted Wednesday with doubts and some opposition.

BUSH a day after delivering his fifth State of the Union address. AFP

The president's call for a 75 percent cut in Middle East oil imports in the next 20 years was the centerpiece of his annual State of the Union speech on Tuesday night.

Seeking to regain public support in an election year, he also pressed key allies in the Middle East to promote democracy and made new criticism of the Iranian regime.

Bush defiantly declared that the United States was the indispensable actor on the global stage, warning that "the only alternative to American leadership is a dramatically more dangerous and anxious world."

The president said America has "a serious problem" because it is "addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world," like the Middle East.

He called for new research into ethanol, coal-fired plants, solar and wind technologies and nuclear energy so that 75 percent of oil imports from the Middle East can be replaced by 2025.

While the administration said plans for increased subsidies would boost research, experts and the media expressed doubts.

"If those technologies have economic merit, no subsidy is necessary. If they don't, then no subsidy will provide it," said Jerry Taylor, a senior fellow at the conservative Cato Institute in Washington.

The Washington Post said the goal is spectacular but the "deadline is far off, and it's not clear what he intends in practice."

The US leader also devoted much of his speech to Middle East politics saying the United States cannot hastily withdraw from Iraq, that Egypt and Saudi Arabia must step up democracy efforts and making a direct appeal to the Iranian people. *AFP*

Energy plan won't cut need for Mideast oil

By Tom Doggett

WASHINGTON—AMERICANS may drive cars in two decades that operate on pollution-free hydrogen or fuel made from grass and wood chips, but it will not be enough to reduce significantly US oil imports from the Middle East.

President George W. Bush told Congress on Tuesday that America was addicted to oil and needed to slash its Middle East crude purchases by 75 percent by 2025 by building vehicles that run on alternative fuels.

The big three US automakers are each working on a hydrogen fuel cell prototype, but so far prices remain too high for commercial sale.

"But at a price range of $700,000 to $1 million, a lot of work needs to be done to get them to a price-point that's feasible," said Eron Shosteck, a spokesperson for the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers.

Much work also needs to be done in ensuring the vehicles meet safety and emission standards, and in developing an infrastructure of hydrogen fueling stations, Shosteck said.

Producers of ethanol, a fuel that can be made from corn, sugar, or waste products like wood chips and switch grass, are preparing to increase output.

"We are pleased that President Bush recognizes the need to move the country toward an energy future that is less reliant on unreliable and increasingly costly foreign sources of oil," said Bob Dinneen, president of the Renewable Fuels Association trade group.

However, ethanol supplies are not seen reaching the volumes needed to replace crude oil shipments from the Middle East and the hydrogen-powered cars are not supposed to be in showrooms at affordable prices until as late as 2020.

And environmental groups say they like Bush's goal to slash oil imports, but do not think it can be reached unless the government orders a significant boost in fuel efficiency standards for car and trucks.

The federal Energy Information Administration said in its long-term forecast released in December that US crude oil imports will average 12.3 million barrels a day in 2025, with shipments from the Middle East about a quarter of that.

That means to reach to the president's goal, about 2.3 million barrels of daily Mideast imports will have to be replaced through the use of new fuels and new cars.

"It's a significant amount of oil. If he were successful it would be very significant. But I don't think it will come to pass," said Sarah Emerson, director at Energy Security Analysis Inc., in Boston.

US ethanol supplies will be just 783,000 barrels a day in two decades—a drop in the bucket compared to the more than 26.1 million barrels per day of crude and petroleum products the country will consume, according to the EIA, which is the Energy Department's analytical arm said. *Reuters*

Israel halts tax payments to Palestinians

JERUSALEM—ISRAEL ON WEDnesday halted tax payments to the cash-strapped Palestinian Authority over Hamas' election victory, prompting the Palestinians to turn to Saudi Arabia and Qatar for extra cash to cushion the economic shock.

Customs revenue collected by Israel on behalf of the authority is the main source of funding for the Palestinian budget. The money, transferred on the first of each month, is used to pay an estimated 140,000 Palestinian government workers.

But the United States later on Wednesday pressed Israel to keep up the payments at least until Hamas was in the government.

"We're talking to them about it. But we have made it very clear ... that individual governments, organizations, look for ways that they could support this interim government," state department spokesperson Sean McCormack told reporters.

Palestinian Economy Minister Mazen Sonnoqrot decried what he called Israel's "illegal decision," saying it amounted to "collective punishment" and estimated that as many as 1 million Palestinians would be affected. "This may cause chaos," he said.

Israel's calls to shun a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority received fresh support from US President George W. Bush, who, along with the European Union, has threatened to cut off funding if the group does not renounce violence and recognize Israel.

"In order for the United States to support a Palestinian government run by Hamas, Hamas must change its party platform and change its way of thinking and get rid of this armed group, as well as change its attitude toward Israel," Bush told Reuters in an interview.

Hamas has urged foreign donors to maintain aid but says it could still find other sources of funding in the Arab world. It sent a delegation of Gaza-based officials and exiled leaders on a tour of Arab countries to urge them to keep the money flowing.

"The tour will aim to clarify Hamas' position based on its election agenda and to press Arab countries to continue with financial aid to the Palestinian people," said Sami Abu Zuhri, a Hamas spokesperson in Gaza.

A senior Palestinian official said the Palestinian Authority was in negotiations with Saudi Arabia and Qatar for an emergency increase in aid so the authority can pay its employees. *Reuters*

ACTRESS Ziyi Zhang in a scene from "Memoirs of a Geisha." The film tied with "Crash," and "Good Night, and Good Luck," for six Oscar nominations each. AP

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The Management

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Saddam boycotts trial

BAGHDAD—FORMER Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and other high-profile defendants refused to attend Wednesday's session of their trial, as the embattled tribunal finally completed the first phase of testimony.

Neither Saddam, his defense team, nor any of the three other well-known defendants were at the hearing after they all quit the stormy first session of the trial under new judge Rauf Rasheed Abdel Rahman's control on Sunday.

Wednesday's session saw the trial complete the complainants' phase, with testimony directed against the defendants, and move on to the hearing of witnesses.

In the course of the day's testimony, two complainants and three witnesses related the chilling torture tactics which they had endured or witnessed at the hands of the old regime.

The eight defendants are on trial over the massacre of 148 Shiites from the village of Dujail after an assassination attempt on Saddam in 1982 and face the death penalty if convicted.

One of the more minor defendants, a former local Baath party official, also refused to attend, leaving just three of the original defendants in an accused box marked by five empty black seats. *AFP*

China won't show 'Geisha'

HONG KONG—THE CHINESE government has canceled the release of "Memoirs of a Geisha"—an unexplained decision made amid speculation that officials are worried the sight of Chinese actresses playing Japanese geishas would stir a backlash.

"Memoirs," based on the best-selling novel by Arthur Golden, features "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" star Zhang Ziyi, former Bond girl Michelle Yeoh and Gong Li from "Raise the Red Lantern" as geishas—entertainers skilled in dance, song and conversation.

The casting choices may have raised fears in the Chinese government of provoking strong anti-Japanese sentiment. Sino-Japanese relations have been strained in recent years over territorial disputes and a lingering sense among many Chinese that Japan hasn't sufficiently apologized for its World War II-era military atrocities.

China says up to 300,000 people were killed in Nanjing during a 1937 rampage of murder, rape and looting by Japanese troops.

Many Chinese could be offended by the symbolism of ethnic Chinese actresses serving Japanese, albeit in a movie. Adding the already sensitive nature of the film, Zhang's character in the film serves a businessman who was a Japanese soldier in China's then-Japanese-occupied territory of Manchuria.

Among recent anti-Japanese backlash, demonstrators vandalized Japanese-related shops and smashed windows at Japanese diplomatic offices in Shanghai and Beijing in April to protest alleged whitewashing of atrocities in Japanese textbooks. *AP*

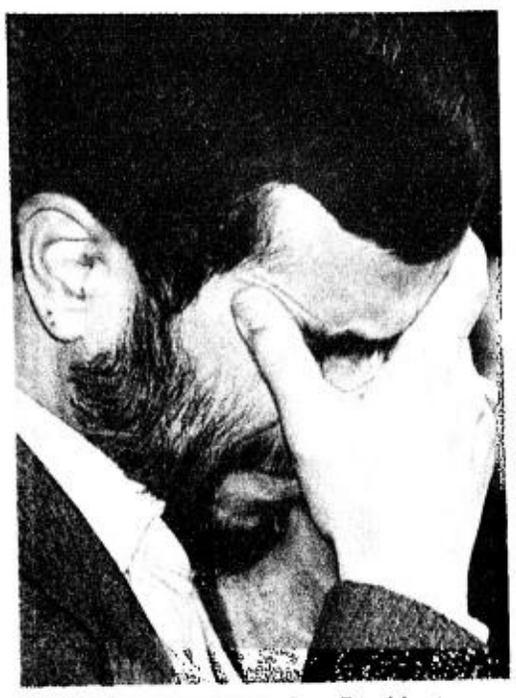
WORLDBRIEFS

Bush: No gas price breaks

NASHVILLE, Tennessee—President George W. Bush says the huge profits of Exxon Mobil Corp. are simply the result of the marketplace, and consumers socked with soaring energy costs should not expect price breaks. Early this week, Exxon reported record profits of $10.71 billion for the fourth quarter and $36.13 billion for the year, the largest of any US company. While some politicians objected furiously, Bush had a different reaction. "There is a marketplace in American society," he said. "There's also a responsibility for energy companies to continue to invest and improve the ways that the American people can get energy," he said. "I would very much hope that Exxon would participate in the development of a pipeline out of Alaska, for example, in order to make sure there's more natural gas available for families and small business owners so the economy will grow." *AP*

Australia resisted Timor freedom

SYDNEY—A report to the United Nations found that Australia actively lobbied to delay East Timor's independence vote in 1999 and prevent its separation from Indonesia, the national broadcaster said Thursday. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) said it had obtained a copy of the report by East Timor's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which accused Australia of violating its duties under international law. The commission produced the 2,500-page report after spending three years collecting evidence about Indonesia's 25-year occupation of East Timor. It said Foreign Minister Alexander Downer indicated Canberra preferred for East Timor to remain legally part of Indonesia and actively lobbied the government in Jakarta to delay the independence vote, ABC said. *AFP*



KHOMEINI ADMIRER—Iran President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad cries during a visit to the tomb of Iran's late founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, in Tehran Jan. 31. AFP

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Reporting Iran to UN Council a certainty

VIENNA, AUSTRIA—AFTER MONTHS OF fruitless negotiations, European nations have set the stage for reporting Iran to the powerful UN Security Council by the end of the week because of concerns the Islamic country's nuclear program is not "exclusively for peaceful purposes."

Iran remained defiant, warning Wednesday that such action will provoke it into doing exactly what the world wants it to renounce—starting full-scale uranium enrichment, a possible pathway to nuclear weapons.

Positions appeared to be hardening on the eve of an International Atomic Energy Agency meeting after European nations formally submitted a US-backed motion for the IAEA's 35-nation board to refer Iran to the Security Council. The two-day board meeting was to start Thursday.

"Nuclear energy is our right, and we will resist until this right is fully realized," President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told a crowd of thousands in the southern Iran city of Bushehr, site of a Russian-built power plant. "Our nation can't give in to the coercion of some bully countries who imagine they are the whole world."

Speaking a day after US President George W. Bush declared in his State of the Union address that "the nations of the world must not permit the Iranian regime to gain nuclear weapons," Ahmadinejad derided the United States as a "hollow superpower" and vowed to pursue the nuclear program.

The IAEA board was expected to approve the motion easily because Russia and China—which both have veto power on the Security Council—now support reporting Iran following months of opposition.

"Iran will find itself before the Security Council," state department spokesperson Sean McCormack said in Washington. "Iran is working to develop a nuclear weapon."

The developments were a boost to the United States, the main proponent of referral. Washington has waited years for international suspicions of Iran's nuclear ambitions to translate into support among board nations.

Iran's decision Jan. 10 to restart small-scale uranium enrichment—and Ahmadinejad's calls for Israel to be wiped off the map—apparently rattled Beijing and Moscow. Iran became more insistent on its right to pursue a nuclear program and less cooperative in talks with European negotiators after the election of the hardline Ahmadinejad last June.

The call for referral was contained in a confidential resolution obtained by The Associated Press. It "requests the director general to report to the Security Council" on steps Iran needs to take to dispel international suspicion it could be seeking to make nuclear arms.

If the board approves referral as expected, it will launch a protracted process that could end in Security Council sanctions for Tehran.

Still, any such moves are weeks or months away. Moscow and Beijing support referral only on condition that the council take no action until at least March, when the board next meets to review the status of an IAEA probe into Iran's nuclear program and recommends further action.

Ali Larijani, Tehran's top nuclear negotiator, warned that Iran would start large-scale uranium enrichment at its Natanz plant and stop intrusive UN inspections of its facilities if reported to the Security Council.

"Natanz is ready for work. We only need to notify the IAEA that we are resuming (large-scale) enrichment. When we do that is our call. If they (report Iran to the Security Council), we will do it quickly," Larijani said.

Iran insists its nuclear program is civilian only and has no other purpose than to generate power. Enrichment can produce either fuel for a nuclear reactor or the material needed to build a warhead.

Iran's threat to resume large-scale enrichment immediately, however, appeared overblown. *AP*

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Show us the money

EDITORIAL

WHILE PEOPLE SEEM RESIGNED TO HIGHER prices because of a higher value-added tax, that doesn't mean they like it. Among other things, the first fallout from the consequences of a higher VAT will be felt as people prepare to spend less for Valentine's Day. As the saying already gaining currency goes, "Love is cheap because everything's *mahal*."

President Macapagal-Arroyo has unleashed a new round of campaigning, trying to give the citizenry billions of reasons to start liking her again: P11.5 billion in January alone for "pump-priming" the economy through spending on what looks like an extremely fatty, pork-rich shopping list: P5 billion for the Philippine Defense Reform, P500 million for farm-to-market roads, P500 million for flood mitigation, P1 billion for the Northrail-Southrail linkage project, P500 million for the Social Housing Finance Corp., P500 million for the half-priced medicine project, P500 million for the PhilHealth insurance program, P500 million for the National Food Authority food program, P500 million for airport development, P500 million for the construction of school buildings, P500 million for high school vouchers, P500 million for the Food-for-School projects, and P500 million for the Barangay and Street Electrification program. She has announced that she would release P1 billion for hiring new cops and the purchase of new cars and guns, not to mention scholarships and higher salaries as well as a P1,000 across-the-board increase in the compensation of government workers.

But given all these generous giveaways and projects being distributed by the President, we wonder how Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye could say with a straight face: "We have already proven that we can bite the bullet for the sake of the economy and the whole world is looking upon us to fully implement our fiscal and economic reforms." The President's P35-billion pump-priming fund for the economy (already in the process of being spent as noted above) will come from "savings" which, she says, was made possible because the government's fiscal team had "overachieved." Since presumably these pump-priming activities signal the end of forced savings, that can't bode well for the deficit-reduction aspect of her fiscal reform program. But the more important question is: Is there rhyme or reason behind the spending that goes beyond larding the military, the bureaucracy and the provinces with patronage?

With the raising of the VAT rate, the government expects to rake in an additional P86 billion in income yearly. Either this income is meant to bring the deficit closer to being eliminated or it is meant to provide a booster-injection of funds to pay for vital investments in necessary infrastructure, social services and other development-spending required for growth. Either way, however, with the administration so obviously eager to spend, spend, spend, the public deserves to know where the money's really going. As Sen. Manuel Roxas II has pointed out, "The people are entitled to tangible benefits from the additional taxes that they pay to the government." He asked if the administration does, indeed, have a plan for spending its new tax income. He said the best way to do this is through a proper discussion of the national budget.

Under normal circumstances, the government would have had a new General Appropriations Act signed around this time of the year. It does not have a budget yet. Considering how thoroughly the President's coalition controls the House of Representatives, and still maintains a sizable number of allies in the Senate, the absence of a budget should be a cause for concern.

The failure to enact a budget means the old budget will be rolled over, so to speak. Which means billions of opportunities for the President and her allies to move around and disburse funds far from the prying eyes of the public or even foreign institutions that are interested in seeing the government put its fiscal house in order. At the very least, in the hands of unscrupulous officials, it affords endless temptations to dip into public funds meant for already-finished projects, to fund an anti-impeachment or pro-Charter change campaign. Politically beneficial as that might be, it doesn't speak well of government's seriousness in spending the public's money either wisely or well.

Love songs at Front Page on Valentine's Day

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

(Continued from last Wednesday)

IN MY FEB. 1 COLUMN, I CRITICIZED THE government policy on squatting. This policy only encourages more squatting and will not solve the problem, I said. It not only treats squatters with kid gloves, it coddles them. Because of it, the government can spend quadrillions of pesos for relocation but in the end there would be more squatters because it gives incentives to squatting.

The Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA), better known as the Lina Law, and the law that decriminalized squatting (both passed because legislators were courting the votes of squatters) are only partly to blame. The Lina Law has rather strong provisions against opportunists and professional squatters, but local government units, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Philippine National Police (PNP) and other government agencies do not enforce the law completely. Only the provisions favoring the squatters are enforced.

The law punishes professional squatters (almost half of all squatters are professional) and squatting syndicates (behind every squatter colony is a syndicate with its officers, lawyers, enforcers and collectors) but no professional squatter or squatting syndicate has ever been prosecuted.

Local government units, from the barangay to the municipal and city levels, are supposed to be the first line of defense against the influx of new squatters, but barangay officials, councilors, mayors and even congressmen coddle the squatters because they are voters. Under the Lina Law, officials who coddle squatters are liable for prosecution, but have you heard of any local government official prosecuted for doing so?

A presidential decree provides that squatters living within the sites of government infrastructure projects such as streets, buildings, rail lines and waterways can be ejected summarily and are not entitled to government relocation programs. The Lina Law also called for a census of squatters—the deadline for which passed several years ago—after which those who are not listed can also be ejected summarily and without government help. Yet the DPWH and other government agencies have spent and are still spending billions of pesos to relocate and pay off squatters who are not entitled to them. That is because the DPWH and other government agencies are afraid of squatters.

For the Northrail project, the government is spending several billions, about half of the cost of the railroad itself, to relocate the squatters on the rail line, although the laws do not provide for that. But the squatters still complain.

Although the government spends a lot of money to acquire and develop the relocation sites and physically transfer squatters, they sell the rights to the lots and houses assigned to them and then go back to squatting, expecting to be relocated again and earn some more. That is why when a street is about to be constructed, squatters flock to the site, expecting to be relocated and paid off by the government. The government seems to be pouring taxpayers' money into a bottomless pit without making a dent on the squatting problem. It rewards incorrigible lawbreakers, the squatters, at the expense of law-abiding taxpayers.

When will the government wake up?

* * *

After the Lettermen, the Four Aces and Andy Williams, can the Tiongco Brothers be far behind? There is a revival of geriatric singers everywhere. This is probably a backlash to the contemporary pop music which is noise being passed off as music and insipid and non-sensical words being passed off as song lyrics. For the romantics, there is nothing like the old songs with beautiful melodies and even more beautiful lyrics.

Because most journalists are romantics, Samahang Plaridel, the association of journalists, will make the Tiongco Brothers and Marri Nallos, the Crystal Voice of Asia, sing love songs at the Front Page piano bar for three consecutive nights—Feb. 13, 14 and 15.

Why three nights? So that you can bring your wife to the Front Page on Feb. 14, Valentine's Day, and your girlfriend on Feb. 13 and 15. This is probably your last chance to do this before the Imee Marcos bill against unfaithful spouses is passed by Congress.

In recognition of the poverty of journalists, tickets for the shows are priced ridiculously low: only P250 for the Feb. 13 and 15 shows, and P350 for the Valentine's Day show.

Tickets are available at the Front Page piano bar and the office of Samahang Plaridel, both on T.M. Kalaw Street, Manila, across the street from the National Library on Rizal Park. For more details and ticket reservations, please call Tel. Nos. 252-1560 (Amy), 523-3367 (Nelly) or cell phone number 0916-568-1357.

* * *

Going back to the anti-unfaithful spouse bill filed by (who else?) Representatives Imee Marcos and Liza Masa, it punishes with six years imprisonment the cheating husband or wife. The bill is quite liberal in its definition of "unfaithful" and "cheating." The erring spouse does not necessarily have to have sex with the third party. If he/she is caught in a "romantic" mood with somebody, he/she would immediately be liable for prosecution.

But wouldn't it be bad for the economy? It would put nightspots and hospitality girls out of business. Husbands would be staying home with their wives night after night. Think of the birth rate.

What the Court really said about Edsa 2

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

THIS WEEK, I JOURNEY ONCE MORE INTO legal history to prepare for the coming 20th anniversary of People Power. The first misconception is that the Supreme Court went gaga over Edsa 2. After all, didn't the justices swear in Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on that historic Saturday noon in January 2001? Didn't they vote 13-0 to throw out former President Joseph Estrada's case questioning the validity of GMA's oath-taking?

In a lecture I gave in May 2001, during the centennial celebration of the Supreme Court, I pointed out that many justices concurred only "in the result," not in their reasoning. Beware the "hooting throng," they warned, lest we "court instability and anarchy."

Justice Reynato Puno's majority opinion held that Erap had resigned but also warned, in relation to Erap's plunder trial, about the "impatient vehemence of the majority": "Rights in a democracy are not decided by the mob whose judgment is dictated by rage and not by reason. Nor are rights necessarily resolved by the power of numbers, for in a democracy, the dogmatism of the majority is not and should never be the definition of the rule of law."

Justice Jose Vitug closed his opinion with what he called an "elder's reminder" and called for "great sobriety and extreme circumspection." We must not be "oblivious to the innate perils of People Power for no bond can be stretched far too much to its breaking point." He asked: "Where does one draw the line between the rule of law and the rule of the mob, or between People Power and Anarchy?"

Justice Vicente Mendoza, joined by Justice Bernardo Pardo, recognized that the right to rebel, while not a constitutional principle, is a natural right which "even then, must be exercised only for weighty and serious reasons." He held that Erap had become permanently disabled because he had lost the public's trust, but he cautioned against "extravagant claims of the right of the people to change their government" outside of the constitutional framework.

Justice Josue Bellosillo similarly held that Erap had been permanently disabled, but detected "strong temptations of the moment to effect change extra-legally" and confessed that "rumblings of a forthcoming tempest crossed [his] mind" as he witnessed Edsa 2.

Justice Santiago Kapunan called People Power a "vague and ambiguous" concept ("amorphous and indefinable," said Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago) and stated bluntly that it "is not one of the modes ... to create a vacancy in the office of the President." How many "irate citizens" would it take to constitute People Power? he asked. The people have the right to assemble and protest. "But this right does not go to the extent of directly acting to remove the President from office by means outside the framework of the Constitution."

Finally, Justice Ynares-Santiago asked: "At what stage do people assembled en masse become a mob? And when do the actions of a mob, albeit unarmed or well-behaved, become people power?" She concluded: "This Court should never validate the action of a mob and declare it constitutional." For her, the majority opinion was "this Court's legitimation through sufferance [that] may have the effect of encouraging People Power Three, People Power Four and People Power *ad infinitum*."

Still the Court, in the end, "declare[d] as a fact what in fact exists" and acknowledged that GMA was president. GMA's partisans at Edsa 2, by their loose and careless rhetoric, may have unleashed a tempting normative framework for Edsa 3 (as I stated in 2001) and an Edsa 4 (as now portends 2006).

The second misconception is that the Edsa 2 decision was a repeat of the earlier Edsa 1 ruling. Far from it. For Edsa 1, the Court conceded that Cory had come to power extra-constitutionally, but its legitimacy was "not a justiciable matter [but] belongs to the realm of politics where only the people ... are the judge."

In contrast, the Court squarely rejected that reasoning for Edsa 2. While the first Edsa was truly revolutionary, the second Edsa was squarely accomplished within the Constitution. And the Court went to creative lengths to find the "totality of prior, contemporaneous and posterior facts and ... evidence," coupled with actual acts of relinquishing the office, showing that Erap had resigned.

Why didn't the Court take the path of least resistance and wash its hands exactly the way it did for Edsa 1? Or why didn't the Court follow the view of some justices that Erap had been "permanently disabled"? Because either way would have opened the "floodgates" of People Power and allowed the ouster of a sitting president through induced political paralysis.

From a larger view, the Court could not have invoked its Edsa 1 ruling because GMA lacked the unimpeachable mandate enjoyed by Cory Aquino in 1986. Strategically, neither did GMA call herself revolutionary the way Cory did, because for as long as the constitutional line of succession was kept, GMA as vice president would trump other contenders. She had her cake, and ate it too. Thus the "constitutional awkwardness" of Edsa 2.

Should it happen that Ms Arroyo is ousted through another Edsa, she will be on the receiving end of these Supreme Court decisions. Vis-à-vis Edsa 1, she will be in the shoes of Marcos, holding a Batasan proclamation of victory that only his partisans believed. Vis-à-vis Edsa 2, she will be in the same boat as Erap, her government paralyzed through "withdrawal of support" by various centers of power, including the military and civil society.

Yet, if she is ousted via an outright coup without the moral cover of People Power, she will seize the constitutional upper hand. What a dreadful sight! One moment she is the tainted President who conspired with Garci to debase the Constitution, and the next she is the indignant guardian of the constitutional faith.

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Bishops as politicians

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

FORMER BRITISH PRIME MINISTER HAROLD Macmillan once said, "If people want a sense of purpose, they should get it from their archbishop. They should certainly not get it from their politicians."

But the question is: What if bishops turn politicians?

The issue is compounded by the element that when bishops promulgate pronouncements on state affairs, there is a mystical aura which suggests that their pastoral pronouncements are the voice of God, speaking through the bishops.

This brings us to a related issue raised by another politician. It is said that during the American Civil War, a visitor to the White House told President Abraham Lincoln, "God is on our side." To which, without batting an eyelash, Lincoln replied: "We trust, sir, that God is on our side. It is more important to know that we are on God's side."

On Jan. 29, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines issued a two-part pastoral statement. The first, titled "Renewing Our Public Life Through Moral Values," covered political concerns that have to do with the political crisis of the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The other concerned an economic issue and called for the repeal of mining laws. The two themes comprise a comprehensive agenda which raised the question whether the bishops have expanded their intervention in state affairs beyond the safe limits of separation between Church and State. Another question is whether the bishops are biting more of the secular stuff than they can swallow. Some would ask: Why don't the bishops get elected and run the country, instead of politicians, so they can be covered by the rule of public accountability?

The CBCP's pastoral statement was much awaited, since there has been mounting public pressure on the bishops to clarify their pastoral letter of July 10, 2005, in which they did not join the clamor for the resignation of President Arroyo, but which left open three options for the resolution of the crisis: voluntary resignation, impeachment, and creation of a truth commission to inquire into allegations that the President had manipulated the 2004 elections.

The second and third modes did not materialize. Having survived the crisis of July 8 and the impeachment complaint last September, the President is unlikely to step down voluntarily. With the changed condition, the pastoral statement of July 10 was overtaken by events and the Church is no longer in a pivotal position, like it was on July 10, to determine the fate of the Arroyo administration.

The Jan. 29 statement took the bishops out of the ambiguity of their July 10 statement and stands out for its clarity in examining the issues of the crisis, now in a state of impasse. With their recent statement, the bishops have shown a better respect for empirical evidence on the political reality than they had last July. Their latest statement did not mince words, while the previous one left many in doubt as to whether the hierarchy was siding with the President, although their decision left no doubt that it gave her some breathing space.

Nothing can be more emphatic and specific about the bishops' position than this opening statement: "We have all observed the failure of political processes to make public servants accountable for w rongdoing.

"What we have seen instead are acts of evasion and obstruction of the truth, as in the case of the wiretapping and the Garcillano controversy.

"While we acknowledge that patriotic and sincere Filipinos have heeded our call in July 2005 for accountability in public office and sought means for the truth to emerge, we also witness those who seem to use 'the search for truth' as a means of furthering their political ambitions.

"As a result of all this, there seems to be a paralyzing gridlock in the political sphere."

These assessments are empirically verifiable. They therefore carry more weight than the pious fulminations of bishops whose rhetoric has been long on rash judgments and short on evidence. Therein lies the merit of the Jan. 29 statement. This time, the bishops have chosen to resist the temptation to play political rabble-rousers and pander to the gallery of a hostile public calling for blood.

The pastoral statement is clear about what to do next.

First, the search for truth must be "relentlessly pursued through structures and processes mandated by law and our Constitution."

"They did not really pursue the truth," said the CBCP president, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, referring to the killing of the impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo last September. "They stopped at technicalities."

Second, electoral reforms should be urgently taken, beginning with the resignation or even prosecution of a number of Commission on Elections officials and the modernization of the election counting process.

Third, the 2007 elections "should not be cancelled."

Fourth, the bishops do not support "hasty efforts" to change the Constitution and said revision "is best done through a constitutional convention."

These proposals constitute a manageable framework of political action that is not driven by any illusion that when bishops speak, they are the voice of God and God is on their side. The bishops' return to clarity does not, however, close the issue of whether their political activism has crossed the boundaries separating Church and State. That is a more disturbing issue than the survival or demise of the Arroyo regime, although it is in the public interest that the latter issue is resolved by 2007.

A 'medical oasis'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A POLITICIAN who recently passed away. He had gone to Texas to seek treatment for his ailment, but spent two weeks waiting in vain for an appointment with the world-renowned specialist recommended to him. When his health situation took a turn for the worse, the politician was confined in a hospital in another state and that was where he died.

Of course, there are no guarantees in life—or in death. But one would have thought that being a prominent public official, as well as having the capacity to pay, would have assured the man the best medical treatment in the world. Then again, neither could his family and friends be assured that even if he did get the treatment he sought, he would still be alive today.

But one could still improve the odds. For many wealthy Filipinos—and even not-so-wealthy ones pushed to the brink of desperation—the last-ditch stand in their battle for survival is often taken abroad, usually after local specialists tell them they have done everything that could be done within their competence. And for many of them, this means traveling to Houston, Texas, where the Texas Medical Center has gained international renown, especially for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases and cancer.

In town until Sunday is a group composed of prominent cancer specialists and representatives of St. Luke's Episcopal Heath System (SLEH), the "principal health care institution" within the Texas Medical Center. The group is here primarily to conduct "exploratory" talks with Filipino doctors, medical institutions and even policymakers. "We're here to partner with you," said Warren Whitehead, assistant vice president for international services of SLEH. "We're not coming as conquering Americans out to take over the Philippine health system."

* * *

ACTUALLY, SLEH and its affiliates within the Texas Medical Center already have a foot in the local market by way of the Houston Medical Group (HMG), which represents the institution in the country. Headed by "goodwill ambassador" Leo de Leon, a Filipino businessman who came home in 1997 after 18 years living in Houston, HMG has developed a program together with leading US-trained Filipino physicians to provide patients and their family "access to world-class medical services, ensuring confidentiality, customer care, and cultural sensitivity."

HMG provides Filipino clients with two types of services. One is the "virtual second opinion," where it sends a patient's medical records to Texas to be reviewed by specialists who will render a second opinion that includes treatment options. If needed, HMG could also arrange for a conference call with SLEH for immediate consultation.

Should the client decide to go for treatment in Houston, HMG could "manage the entire process before, during and after" one's stay, including setting priority appointments and confirmation with the specialists of one's choice, pre-registration for admission to SLEH, a pre-departure briefing, and even airport assistance, translation assistance, and a nurse liaison during one's stay in Texas.

It's the "depth of care" that is available at TMC that puts it way above other health institutions, De Leon believes. "We have a unique resource in that one has access not just to one hospital, or one research institution, but to more than 40 institutions and all the expertise, technology and research work in them."

TMC is a real "medical city," with over 42 institutions, including 13 hospitals and 11 schools, all clustered together in an area roughly the size of Makati. In 2004, it registered 5.2 million patients, about 10,000 of them from over 80 countries outside the United States. SLEH alone has five "centers of excellence": the Texas Heart Institute headed by world-renowned cardiovascular surgeon Dr. Denton Cooley, the Texas Cancer Institute, the Texas Liver Institute, the Texas Urology Institute, and the Texas Lung Institute.

* * *

FOR this visit, De Leon brought over two top specialists from SLEH: Dr. Brian Miles, medical director of the Texas Cancer Institute and a leading authority on urology; and Dr. Sewa Legha, director of SLEH's Melanoma Center.

"I am very impressed with the physicians we've talked to and the institutions we've visited," says Dr. Miles, adding that he sensed "a strong desire to learn more" among the Filipinos. In Houston, he said, they have not just a truly international patient base, but equally important, a multinational staff. "We want the best in the business. It doesn't matter what country you're from. We're also aware that diseases have different pathologies and having a rich resource of doctors from around the world helps us understand and treat these."

At present, aside from Manila, SLEH has satellite offices in Lima, Peru and Milan, Italy.

"I like to think of Texas Medical Center as a medical oasis," says Whitehead, ever the salesman. He has a point, though. It's rare to find such a concentration of medical talent, cutting-edge technology and the latest advances in research, from all around the world, in one place. For desperate patients, Houston might well represent hope and time, just when they're running out of both.

* * *

OOPS! I have no excuses, but I made an error in Wednesday's column on the Comelec and the coming 2007 elections. I said the commissioners had wasted P5 billion of the people's money in the botched "modernization" program. The real figure is "only" P2.3 billion—still a sizable figure, and still money paid for by taxpayers. And yes, the election commissioners, starting with Chair Benjamin Abalos, should still resign and not insist that impeachment is the only way they can be forced out of office.

The first shot

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

FEB. 4, AS ALL SCHOOLCHILDREN KNOW, WAS the day in 1899 that marked the beginning of the Filipino-American War. Despite the recent correction of the historical error by the National Historical Institute, some people believe (and insist on believing) that the first shot of this war was fired on an old stone bridge in San Juan that was once honored by a historical marker installed by the pre-war Philippines Historical Committee. The marker has since been moved from San Juan Bridge to an obscure corner on Sociego Street in Sta. Mesa, Manila. While San Juan lost an annual commemoration, Manila gained another historic site and we hope the mayor of Manila or the Manila Cultural and Tourism Office will continue to remind people of the historical event that occurred there on the night of Feb. 4, 1899.

We are all familiar with the story. Private William Grayson (1876-1941) shot at Filipino soldiers and with this act ignited a night of gunfire that has since come to be known as the "First Shot in the Philippine-American War." It is unfortunate that we do not have the name and rank of the Filipino who was shot at. We are not even sure if he died or not, although Grayson, in an interview given months after the event, proudly claimed he shot not one but two Filipinos that evening. A later account even gives the rank of the unnamed Filipino as a lieutenant.

Contrary to popular belief, Grayson was not an American, though he was with Company D of the first Nebraska Infantry Regiment. He was actually an Englishman. Previous to serving in the Philippines, he was an immigrant and a hotel worker who only acquired US citizenship in 1900. Thus, the first shot in the Philippine-American War was actually fired by an Englishman, not an American.

We must thank Dr. Benito Legarda for further research on Grayson. Legarda found out that upon his return to the United States from the Philippines, Grayson settled in San Francisco and got married in October 1899. "He worked as a house painter or an undertaker, and spent many years convincing Army doctors that his ulcers and malaria were service-related." In history books we h ave two pictures of him, one standing and facing the camera, the other crouching and aiming his rifle.

His own account of the event goes:

"That night, about 8 o'clock, [Orville] Miller and I—there were two of us—were cautiously pacing our district. We came to a fence and were trying to see what the Filipinos were up to. Suddenly, near at hand, on our left, there was a low unmistakable Filipino outpost signal whistle. [This] was immediately answered by a similar whistle, about 25 yards to the right. Then a red lantern flashed its signal from Blockhouse No. 7. We had never seen such a sign before. In a moment something rose slowly up not 20 feet in front of us. It was a Filipino. I yelled, 'Halt!' and made it pretty loud, for I was accustomed to challenging the officer of the guard in approved military style. The man moved. I challenged him with another 'Halt!' Then he imprudently shouted, 'Alto!' at me. Well, I thought the best thing to do was to shoot him. He dropped. If I didn't kill him, I guess he died of fright.

"Then two Filipinos sprang out of the gateway about 15 feet from us. I called 'Halt!' and Miller fired and dropped one. I saw another was left. Well, I think I got my second Filipino that time. We retreated to where our six other fellows were and I said: 'Line up, fellows, the niggers are in here all through these yards.' We then retreated to the pipe line and got behind the water main and stayed there all night. It was some minutes after our second shots before the Filipinos began firing."

There is no mention of the San Juan Bridge in Grayson's narrative. We are described as "niggers" and the account does not state that a few days before the shooting, there was friction between the American and Filipino troops because the latter would cross a road from Blockhouse 7 to Blockhouse 6 and in so doing passed American lines. One also wonders whether the Filipino soldier knew what "Halt!" meant. In the darkness, I imagine that when the Filipino answered back "Alto!" he was probably smiling and waving his hand in a friendly gesture but was met with a bullet. This is a part of our history we know so well, but when studied in school we are not made to imagine or reconstruct what actually happened and why it led to the Filipino-American War.

While browsing through issues of a little known magazine called The Philippines Gossip, I came across an article by Col. H.B. Mulford, titled "The First shot of the Philippine Insurrection," that long ago already stated that the event did not happen on San Juan Bridge:

"...It has been generally supposed that the first shot fired on that memorable night was fired on San Juan Bridge; this is a mistaken impression; in fact, it has been generally reported that both the American and Filipino sentries stationed at either end of the San Juan bridge remained at their posts during the entire night, and that neither fired at the other."

Where did the story of San Juan Bridge come from? Why do some people persist in perpetuating the story of the bridge in the light of current research that says the shot was fired on Sociego Street?

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Sayonara

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

SHE WAS SULLEN AND SILENT THE DAY SHE HAD TO leave, back in June, trying to keep back her tears. At 22, she had never been outside of Luzon, never flown on a plane. Now she was going off to Japan, and the six-month deployment seemed like eternity.

She'd call occasionally from Japan, going through the usual *kumusta* and assurances she was fine. Always she'd talk about the weather—initially the summer heat, then the rains, then the leaves changing colors in the fall, and then the cold starting to set in as winter approached.

Then she was home, in time for Christmas.

She was delighted to be home, to be reunited with the family, but she was also missing her friends back in Japan. She had pictures of all her *ates* and her Filipina *mama-san*. She cried showing the digital pictures taken during their *despedida* at the club, with a large banner that read "Sayonara!"

Her cell phone rang incessantly, with calls from other Filipinas she had befriended, some back here in the Philippines, others still in Japan. There were also calls from her Japanese guests. She had picked up a fair amount of Japanese, but her conversations were peppered with Filipino. The guests had learned words like "*talaga*," "*totoo*," "*bola*," "*salbahe ka*" and "*'tang na*." No, she said, most of them had never been to the Philippines, but promised they'd come over to visit.

'Lapad'

Was there someone special? Yes, she smiled, like a young schoolgirl with a crush. And he too had promised to visit some time, and help out.

Help was a word she was hearing now all too frequently from relatives calling in: Your niece is sick, please help. Meralco's cutting our electricity next week, please help.

Her contract stated she'd get $2,000 a month. That would have been $12,000 for six months—P660,000 at P55 to a dollar, which was the rate when she left. While in Japan, she received a living allowance of 1,500 yen a week (about P750). The rest, they told her, she would get once she returned from Japan.

She went straight from the airport to the agency to collect. She knew there would be all kinds of deductions for her passport, visa, ticket, dancing lessons, board and lodging, even cosmetics. The agency had it all computed, and also referred to the dollar and the yen dropping. They gave her P15,000.

But she had expected that, lucky that she was still getting some money. She had worked hard for the tips, and had done well, her tips coming to about 60 "lapad," each being 10,000 yen. There were to be endless trips to money changers. She'd walk past a dealer and they could tell she had yen, calling out "four five" or P4,500 for every lapad. With some hard bargaining she could get P4,600, but by January, the changers were adamant about P4,500. Exchange rates were bad, they said.

Sixty *lapad* at P4,500 each comes to P270,000—not bad at all for six months of work. But if money came in fairly easily, it's been spent quite quickly, thanks to all the requests for help. Two months after returning home, she's exchanged almost 20 *lapad*.

Disneyland

She had her *pasalubong* prepared, sent in advance in two *balikbayan* boxes, dispatched through one of the many door-to-door delivery services.

There was anticipation as the boxes and suitcases were opened, the gifts brimming over. They were all from her guests: lots of Nissin seafood-flavored instant noodles, several types of Meiji chocolates, seaweeds, seaweed crackers and cookies (without seaweeds). But those only counted as *pasalubong*. She still had to buy Christmas gifts, and that she did in 168.

There were oohs and aahs around the noodles: so much more ingredients. Look, real shrimps!

Days later, she said she'd checked the local Japanese groceries. The instant noodles were selling for P96 each. It was a bit like the days of Clark and PX, "stateside" goods being extra special if they came out direct from boxes that smelled like America.

But the boxes from Japan were odorless. She talked about how obsessed the Japanese were with cleanliness. She'd brought back a bit of that obsession, in the form of Japanese laundry powder.

She was working in a city about an hour-and-a-half away from Tokyo. One of her guests had picked her up early one morning for an outing. They drove through Tokyo but didn't get off. Their destination was Tokyo Disneyland, where they spent the day and where she got mostly stuffed animals. Then they had to rush back so she could get to work. That was the only time she left the city where she was working.

Her *balikbayan* box yielded a menagerie of stuffed animals and Disney characters. Besides the food and detergent and stuffed toys, there were the *abubut* or trinkets, Hello Kitty types, mostly pink. She described stores that sold these trinkets, where everything cost 100 yen each (about P45).

Maybe, she thought, she could open a store and sell the trinkets. But her father wanted a tricycle, her mother a house and lot. Her brother's due to start high school in June.

Timers

She worries about her diminishing *lapad*, especially with friends warning her the exchange rate was dropping. When she left back in June, you could get P5,000 for each *lapad*.

She doubts if she can go back. The Japanese government used to allow 80,000 Filipina entertainers each year, then cut it down to 8,000. The recruiting agencies protested, came out with full-page ads appealing to the government to intervene. Both the Japanese and Philippine governments stood their ground so it's unlikely there will be too many "timers"—those who go back, a second, a third, a fourth time. Timers are a different lot, smarter, "*mas wa-is*", and that wasn't supposed to mean wiser; it's just that they don't cry as much when they were away.

Japan's beautiful, she keeps repeating, and the Japanese are very nice, *mabait*. At the same time, Japan and the Japanese remain mysterious. She never entered a Japanese home. She saw Japanese mothers with their babies, oh but the babies were always so fat, and she'd think of the baby she'd left back home.

She'd never heard of tea ceremonies, or ikebana and flower arranging. She did learn to use chopsticks, and to eat sashimi. And the day after she came home, she bought Japanese rice at P70 a kilo because she missed it.

She saw Japan's changing seasons from her apartment windows and on her walk to the club, every day at around 6 in the evening. But what she saw of Japan, she interpreted always through the lens of home. The rains made her sad, her longing for home turning for the worse as days got shorter, and colder.

It was good to be home. But it'd be nice to go again.

The agency says maybe they can find a placement for her in Korea. That's where everyone goes now, she says.

Council of State forgot off-and-on Mindanao war

IT IS SAD TO NOTE THAT THE COUNCIL OF State meeting, held last Jan. 24 and attended only by allies of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, did not discuss matters of greater consequence for the Filipino people—like the off-and-on war in Mindanao. People are tired of watching the daily political charades. No matter how loud our politicians proclaim their nationalism to the high heavens, at the end of each day, we still find our wages unable to buy enough food to put on our family tables; our water and electricity bills soaring out of our reach; our children's well-being—body and mind—threatened because the quality of health and education services has so deteriorated.

The war in Mindanao is far from over notwithstanding Ms Arroyo's highfalutin' policies on anti-terrorism, which she uses to justify US military presence in Mindanao and to beg for more military aid. At the end of every Arroyo war in Mindanao, our people either end up in cramped and poorly provided resettlement areas or dead in their farms or homes.

From the very beginning, it was clear that Ms Arroyo convened the Council of State to push for Charter change. When it ended, the so-called "historic" meeting had addressed none of the country's real problems. All it came up with was the decision to allocate P5 million of the people's money for a public information committee to advertise and sell Cha-cha. Instead of coming up with policies and programs that would significantly improve the lives of millions of Filipinos—Christians and Muslims alike—who are earning $2 a day, all it offered was a committee tasked with feeding the Filipino nation with honey-coated lies about the merits of Cha-cha.

The majority of the people in Mindanao are not—and were never—in favor of Cha-cha because we know that it would not necessarily liberate us and our children from the scourge of war or poverty. The Council of State meeting and the earlier Lakas caucus, as well as the De Venecia-Ramos-GMA powwow, only reinforced our conviction that Cha-cha would not be good for our people and that it would benefit only our greedy and opportunistic politicians and their cronies.

The people in Mindanao oppose in the strongest terms possible GMA-FVR-JDV's Cha-cha initiative, as much as any constitutional amendment that will surrender our country, resources and people to further economic exploitation and political repression, whether done by foreign neo-colonizers or by their local satraps.

We need changes, but they should be genuine and lasting changes, and they should be for our people and by our people.

—AMIRAH ALI LIDASAN, secretary general, Moro-Christian Peoples Alliance (MCPA), 48 Mapagbigay St., Barangay Pinyahan, Diliman, Quezon City

Chile's Bachelet and Macapagal-Arroyo

MICHAEL TAN'S COLUMN ON CHILE'S NEWly elected President Michelle Bachelet (PDI, 1/20/06) struck a sensitive chord, even for us, Filipino migrants in Greece which is thousands of miles away from the Philippines. Certainly, we wish and believe that our country could be great, could still develop, so that Filipinos do not need to use their brains to serve other countries. Thus, the Philippines does not have to suffer a brain drain and the social costs of migration.

But all this phenomenon of brain drain in fact reflects the failure of our leaders to truly serve their country. And we see in the woman leader of Chile a person totally different from Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Unlike her, Bachelet genuinely feels for the people of Chile, for their suffering and for their dreams.

The present occupant of Malacañang was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. She never knew hunger. I need not say more. Tan's column said it all.

—JOSE VALENCIA, balita1@imn.gr

How do we rate Filipino teachers?

HOW DO WE RATE OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM? Is it accurate to test the proficiency and competence of our teachers in all subjects, including those that they have not touched for years?

My mother has been an elementary school teacher for years. She is actually retiring next year because of work stress. I just found out that they had to take exams in Math and other subjects. This is reportedly being done by our government because of the alarming decline in the quality of our educational system.

But wait a minute!

Are the teachers the main reason why the quality of our educational system is poor? My mother handles more than 50 students in Grade 3 in a very crowded room. I'm just worried that the results of the examination would be used as basis for blaming our teachers as the culprit behind the deterioration of our educational system.

I am not opposed to these examinations, as long as they are done regularly and with corresponding seminars and workshops.

My mother has her share of greatness when she coached students, including me and my sister, for regional Quiz Bees. Even new graduates review for an exam. Do we expect teachers who have been teaching Culture or Arts for 15-30 years to master mathematics? Perhaps, officials of the Department of Education should ask themselves: Do we offer refresher courses, seminars and workshops to enhance our teachers' competencies? I am proud to be a product of our public school system in the 1980s. But right now, I doubt if the problems in our schools—no matter if you put a whiz kid to attend to them—could be solved overnight.

Our classrooms are just too crowded, and the teachers are no longer given the chance to specialize in subjects which they are most suited to.

—ANTHONY GENE S. VILLAMOR, Banilad, Mandaue City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

The future that mining holds for our country

EITHER OF TWO POSSIBLE SCENARIOS IS certain to come about if the government succeeds in attracting global mining corporations to feast on the country's mineral wealth: one, Philippine mineral resources will be depleted in 20 years; two, irreparable harm to the environment will render the country's mineral deposits too "environmentally costly" to mine.

Either way, we lose.

According to Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) records, between 1996 and 2000, the country lost 32 percent of its copper, nickel and gold reserves. That this happened during a slump in mining operations only adds to speculations that so much more of these precious minerals will be lost amid unbridled mining activities directed by foreign interests. That's just too much hospitality for a country that needs all its resources for its own development.

Before our leaders think of auctioning off this wealth, they should pause to consider what disservice they are doing to the national sovereignty and the people's search for genuine development—a kind that taps our vast mineral deposits to create and advance domestic metal-based industries.

On the other hand, mining by foreigners will put our environment in an overwhelmingly more precarious state. From 1990 to 2000, 10 major incidents of mine spills were recorded by the MGB. There is clear and present danger that more mines will collapse soon due to dilapidated structures. These spills caused tremendous harm to the environment, property and means of livelihood of farmers, fisherfolks and indigenous peoples. Most celebrated of such incidents were the ones that befell Marinduque in 1993 and 1996. Half of Marinduque province is now a wasteland and will continue to be so for a hundred years, notwithstanding lackluster efforts at rehabilitation. Still, the government is even now again preparing the island for mining's return despite widespread local opposition.

Conventional and scientific wisdom prods everyone to take a precautionary view on mining's effects on the environment; more so, in the case of archipelagic Philippines with its rich terrestrial, aerial and marine biodiversity.

There is, however, another scenario fast developing. Nationwide, Filipinos are coming out in opposition to the government's anti-Filipino mining program. It is only a matter of time when—like what happened to the government in Bolivia—Filipinos will boot out a regime that does not mind selling the nation's patrimony and imperiling its environment and the people's long-term social and economic sustainability.

—ELY MANALANSAN, information officer, Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines, 26 Matulungin St., Barangay Central, Quezon City

Colored with politics

(As far as INQ7 readers were concerned, the last fortnight belonged to the featherweight boxing champion Manny Pacquiao. But something dampened the resurgent national pride: politicians rushing to bask in a muscled brown athlete's moment of glory as though it were their own, only to go back to nasty business as usual.)

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

The color of Manny is brown—a little brown bomber of the great brown race that became famous in the boxing world. He turned into a celebrity [whose] name rivals Hollywood stars in the walk of fame.

As his stock and star rise, people from all walks of life want a piece of him—autographs, a Kodak moment, like [that] shrieking admirer fainting at seeing an idol in the flesh. This includes politicians and a President who became fans wanting to see Pacquiao in the flesh, forgetting that they are public figures whose actions and words are scrutinized by prying media eyes. [To] the euphoria of victory felt by every Filipino, they add another color to Manny's victory: political color.

And there's another color: green. With $2 million in prize money, and more coming from pay-per-view TV, Pacquiao is laughing all the way to the bank, unbothered by political nonsense.**—Godo Arago, California 90058**

* * *

Politicians weren't there last year when Manny Pacquiao fought the good fight and still lost. He dealt with his defeat alone and rose above it with intense discipline and rigorous training. Now, he's a big winner, and everyone who needs votes in the next national elections is his special friend.

But beyond national pride, everyone should just get over it soon and get back to work. It's an inspirational lesson for everyone, not just Filipinos.

Yes, it makes a great metaphor for the country's ailing economy, but metaphors won't cure the national economy or keep local politicians from stealing people's taxes.**—Marvin Carlos, Woodside, New York**

* * *

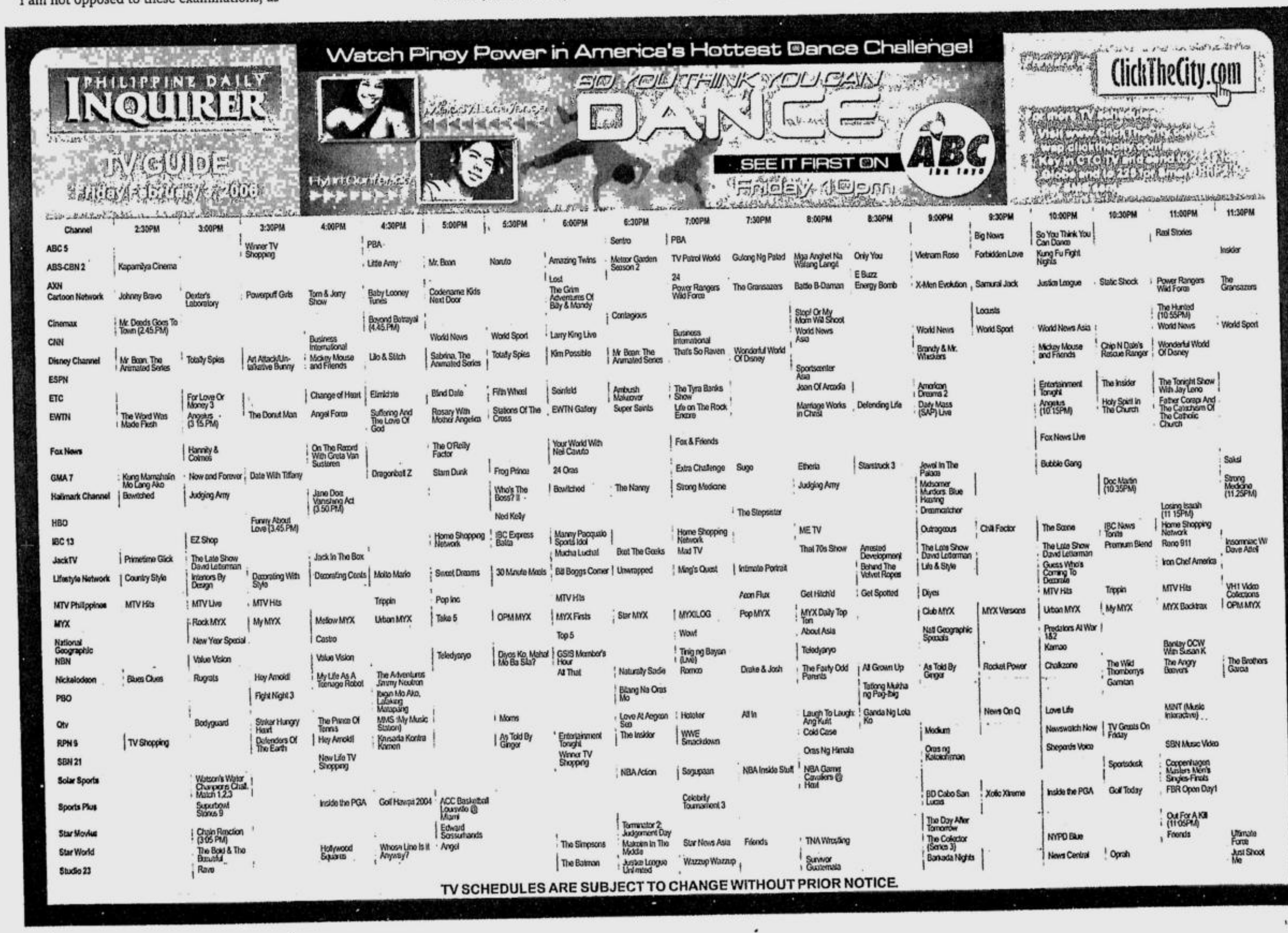
The recent victory of our champion Manny Pacquiao proved to be a great unifier in these times of instability and a great source of pride in the Philippines. I am 21 and an immigrant in the United States. As a Filipino, I had never felt any great pride in my veins.

I had not felt this pride since that afternoon of June 12, 1998, when President Fidel Ramos led the nation in singing our national anthem in Rizal Park live on national television, and when my parents participated in the ouster of Ferdinand Marcos, with the millions that flocked to Edsa in February 1986.

Manny Pacquiao has proven that we can still be united—Filipinos from all walks of life, administration or opposition, rich or poor. On that fateful day last week, Manny proved to be the "Great Unifier" for his country. Through punches, jabs and hooks, he put the Philippines back on the map. The nation was filled with euphoria. The crime rate was zero during the fight, [rival] politicians shook hands, people celebrated all over the country.

I hung a Philippine flag outside our home for the second time. The first time I did it was in our home in Bulacan during the Independence centennial celebration in 1998.

Let us not forget that we do not need a match or victory of Manny Pacquiao every day to be united. We just need inspiration, and Manny is only one of the millions of Filipinos that can be the source of pride. Every day, let us be inspired to unite to move our motherland forward. Don't you think it's time to start the reforms we have been looking for?**—John Glenn Cando, 41-1611 Humuniki Place, Waimanalo, Hawaii, USA**



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GMA forms body to probe mine spill

DENR clears Lafayette of mercury use

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONronment and Natural Resources yesterday rushed to the defense of Lafayette Mining Inc., backing the company's claim that it was not using mercury in its gold mining project in Rapu-Rapu, Albay.

The mercury found by environmentalists in areas surrounding the Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project site in Albay could have come from nearby active volcanoes, like the Mayon Volcano, and natural evaporation of bodies of water.

Previous geological studies have also revealed that there is a mercury deposit in Albay.

"The DENR is continuously collecting water samples from the project area and the affected water bodies but there is no sufficient evidence to attribute mercury contamination to the operations of the Rapu-Rapu mine," the DENR said in a statement yesterday.

The DENR released the findings late yesterday after an environmentalist group announced that toxic heavy metals were found in sediments samples from the area surrounding the Lafayette mine site.

"The presence of heavy metals such as cadmium, chromium, lead, arsenic and mercury from the sediment samples analyzed ... is to be expected because the project area inherently contains these metals," the DENR said.

The unusually high levels of metals indicate the economic viability of mining in the area as gold and copper deposits are associated with such metals.

With David Hayes

POLANGUI, ALBAY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo ordered a thorough investigation of the mine spill in Rapu-Rapu, Albay following a statement made by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines opposing continued mining in the country.

The President, who was here to inaugurate infrastructure projects, also announced the release of P10 million to fishermen who suffered losses in income after a fish scare gripped several fishing villages in Sorsogon and Albay.

During her visit, Ms Arroyo authorized the forming of an independent commission to look into the operations of Lafayette Mining Inc.

The President made the move following a meeting with members of the CBCP in Malacañang Monday. Part of the meeting's agenda was mining.

Commission members will be selected by bishops in the Bicol region, who initiated the dialogue on the Lafayette issue with the President.

The bishops had designated Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes as spokesperson and authorized him to choose the commission's members.

Michael Defensor, Ms Arroyo's chief of staff and former environment secretary, said the government could not unilaterally cancel the mining permits that the government already granted.

"The government has contractual obligations that went with the permit, especially since the investors have already infused some $300 to $400 million into their operations," Defensor said.

He, however, said the mining firms must continue to prove the technical worthiness of their operations, from their standard operating procedures to engineering works.

The government, he added, would not hesitate to shut down any mining company that would violate the conditions in their permits and environmental laws.

Ms Arroyo said the P10 million financial help for fishermen will be coursed through the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC) who will closely coordinate with a committee to be headed by Msgr. Francisco Monje of the Sorsogon diocese.

The assistance was approved with the intercession of business tycoon Loida Nicolas-Lewis.

Julito Sarmiento, Lafayette corporate secretary and director, said Lafayette was willing to help the commission in its investigation.

Ms Arroyo said funds for the commission's operations will come from Lafayette. *Bobby Labalan, Leo Ganace and Michael Jaucian, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SOLDIERS patrol a village in Tarlac following clashes with communist guerrillas that sent residents fleeing.

JAY DIRECTO/AFP

Troops keep villagers out of Tarlac homes

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—AT least 3,000 residents who fled Tuesday's clashes between government troops and communist rebels in Sta. Ignacia, Tarlac, have yet to return home.

Sta. Ignacia Mayor Reynaldo Modomo said the plan of the residents of Barangays Sta. Inez West, East and Centro to return to their villages was still not possible on Thursday as military officers ordered them to wait until soldiers conclude clearing operations in the areas.

"We're told these are preventive measures meant to put our people to safety," he said.

He said social welfare workers were monitoring if civilians were killed or hurt in the clashes and in the air raids done by the military in villages where the fighting broke out.

The military recovered at least 10 bodies of slain New People's Army rebels. A soldier was killed while four others were wounded in the series of encounters.

As the gunfights raged, Modomo said Sta. Ignacia residents, many of them Ilocano farmers, left the villages and went to the houses of their relatives. Some have tried sneaking back into the hilly villages during the day to check on their crops and farm animals.

Modomo, however, said his people were not complaining of food shortage.

"The situation is under control. But they really wanted to go home soon," he said.

Col. Ricardo Garcia, chief of the Army's 702nd Infantry Brigade, denied ordering an evacuation in the three villages.

In a separate interview, Lt. Col. Gregory Cayetano, commander of the 71st Infantry Battalion that engaged some 40 rebels on Tuesday, said the residents left voluntarily after they were advised to stay out of harm's way.

"We don't want to use them or be used by the rebels as shields," Cayetano said.

Garcia said a few residents had tried to return on Wednesday but left in haste after they received reports that NPA rebels planned to attack the villages. He said he pulled out some soldiers to reduce tension there.

ROUNDUP

5 killed in Bulacan attack

SAN ILDEFONSO, Bulacan—Five people were shot and killed by unidentified men in a farm in Barangay Pinaod here on Wednesday night. Chief Insp. Emma Libunao, town police chief, said at least 15 men barged into the house of Ricardo Valmocina, 61, at 9 p.m., looking for guns supposedly kept by the family. When the suspects failed to find any firearm, they searched the family's belongings. Valmocina and his son, Roel Joseph, 19, tried to stop the suspects but were shot. The suspects took P100,000 worth of jewelry, cash and four cellular phones from the family, police said. They also shot and killed farm caretaker Melchor Cardinal, 24, Michael Malumay, 19, and one identified only as Jojo.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Holiday in Bulacan for Ople

MALACANANG declared tomorrow, Feb. 3, a special non-working holiday in Bulacan to mark the 79th birthday of the late senator Blas Ople. Ople, also foreign affairs secretary at the time of his death, was cited in Proclamation No. 981 as a "model to the Filipino people, especially to Bulakenyos." Family and friends will celebrate Mass at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio. Another Mass will be offered at the St. Anne's Shrine in Hagonoy, Bulacan. A Blas Ople commemorative stamp will be unveiled.

Bus falls off ravine; 8 dead

BAGUIO CITY—Eight people died while 22 others were hurt when the bus they were in plunged into a 200-foot ravine in Kabayan, Benguet on Tuesday. Vicente Tomazar, Cordillera director of the Office of Civil Defense, said the driver of the Kabayan-bound Norton bus failed to steer the vehicle away from a curve along the Bokod-Kabayan Road because of a mechanical defect. Among the eight fatalities were Juliet Ingloso, curator of the National Museum in Kabayan town, and her son, Christian James. Two victims died while being taken to the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center.

Desiree Caluza and Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Fish landing port

CITY OF CALAPAN—Bulalacao mayor Ernilo Villas called on the Philippine Fisheries and Development Authority to allot additional funds for the extension of the 30-meter long Bulalacao fish landing port by another 50 meters to allow bigger vessels to come in. This infrastructure improvement is expected to help boost Bulalacao's fishing and tourism industries. Villas cited Bulalacao's huge potential with its 13 islands and beautiful beaches and is just two hours away from Boracay by boat.

Marciano Virola Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Operator blamed for mishaps

CALAMBA CITY—A Laguna-based group on Monday said the private operator of the North Luzon Expressway (NLEx) should be held accountable for the deaths and injuries caused by accidents inside the expressway last week. In a statement, the Road Users Protection Advocates (Rupa) said the recent seven-vehicle smashup inside the NLex should prompt the government to review its agreement with the Manila North Tollways Corp (MNTC). Three people died in the smashups, including the wife of Subic, Zambales Mayor Jeffrey Khonghun. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Villar daughter Jaro queen

CAMILLE Villar, only daughter of Sen. Manuel Villar and Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar, was presented as Queen of Jaro Agro-Industrial and Charity Fair 2006. The coronation night and dinner was held Feb. 3 at the Feast of Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria (Our Lady of Candles), patron of the Archdiocese of Jaro, Iloilo. Camille Villar traces her parental roots to Iloilo. Senator Villar's father was born in Tanza, Molo and traces his roots to Cabanatuan, Balasan and Miag-ao.

Cavite gov sues 3 tabloids for libel

CALAMBA CITY—For allegedly maligning his character and reputation, Cavite Gov. Erineo "Ayong" Maliksi has filed a P50 million libel suit against three community papers being run by what he called as "bogus mediamen" in the province.

Named respondents in Maliksi's 15-page complaint were Katapat publisher Archie Gadang and staffers Jimmy Saberon and Leonardo Eduave; Tony Tabbad, Romy Tornito and Cayet Sarmiento of Peryodiko; and Rudy Apollo, Michelle Apollo, Reynaldo Apollo and Ed Lara Covinar of Asianstar Weekly.

"In the middle of 2004, these tabloids started publishing articles whose sole objective is to destroy my reputation," he said.

Maliksi's lawyer filed the case at the assistant provincial prosecutor's office in Imus town last Jan. 16, 2006.

The governor said the three tabloids have "engaged in a malicious and systematic campaign to vilify (me) and the provincial government."

The governor said while he respects the freedom of the press to criticize public officials like him, "these tabloids cannot by any means be categorized as part of the free and legitimate press." *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SC nullifies Meralco's 13.27¢/kWh hike in '04

From page A1

"In this case, the consumers have the right to be informed of ... Meralco's application for the increase of its generation charge," the high tribunal said.

It was the second time in as many years that the Supreme Court had nullified an increase in Meralco rates.

In June 2004, the court voided a 12-centavo per kWh provisional rate increase granted by the ERC to Meralco in the case of the Freedom from Debt Coalition vs ERC.

Voting 8-5, the Supreme Court overruled the decision of the ERC, saying that it was a product of a "blatant and inexcusable" breach of the law.

Among the bases for the decision were Meralco's failure to publish its application for the rate hike and the ERC's failure to resolve the motion of the FDC before acting on Meralco's application.

Homeowners' association

The second case stemmed from a suit filed in 2004 by the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms, the Federation of Village Associations and the Federation of Las Piñas Homeowners Associations.

The petitioners claimed that the rate increase was approved without, among other things, the required publication of Meralco's amended application, which deprived the consumers of a notice to contest it.

Publication is required by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Energy Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) of 2001.

In line with Epira, the ERC required all distribution utilities to file applications for the unbundling of rates.

Meralco filed its application for the approval of its unbundled rates and the appraisal of its assets on Dec. 26, 2001.

After hearings, the ERC approved on March 20, 2003, Meralco's unbundled schedule of rates effective in the next billing cycle. The ERC also directed Meralco to stop charging the purchased power adjustment (PPA) upon effectivity of the unbundled rates.

Adjustment mechanism

The commission said any change in the cost of purchased power shall be reflected as deferred charges, which could be recovered through the Generation Rate Adjustment Mechanism (GRAM).

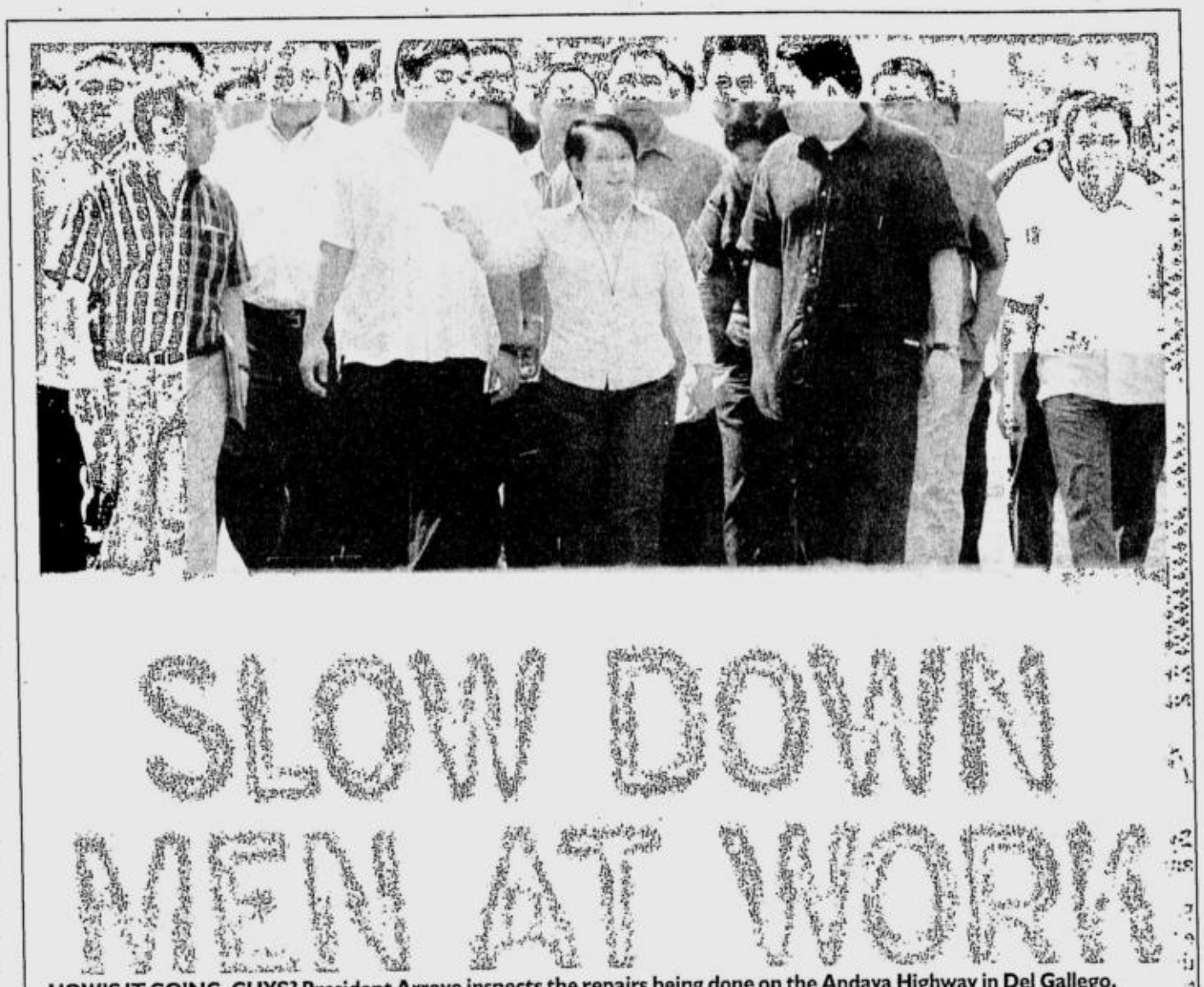
Meralco, at the time, claimed that the proposed generation charge, which was subsequently approved by the ERC, conformed with the generation rate formula under the implementing rules for the recovery of fuel and independent power producer costs.

In its defense, Meralco said "it would be violative of due process to require it to comply [with the publication requirement] ... [because] it would be subjected to a long and tedious process of recovering its fuel and purchased power costs."

The company said GRAM "pays for the fuel and purchased power costs to its suppliers even before it could fully collect from its consumers."

Except for the carrying cost, not a single centavo of GRAM is retained by Meralco. The money is turned over to National Power Corp. and independent power producers from which Meralco buys the electricity it retails to customers.

GRAM allows the quarterly adjustment of the generation charge to reflect the changes in fuel and purchased power costs after a review by the ERC.



HOW'S IT GOING, GUYS? President Arroyo inspects the repairs being done on the Andaya Highway in Del Gallego, Camarines Sur. The road is a major link between the Bicol Region and the Visayas. With her are Mayor Bayani Veluz (left), DPWH Bicol regional director Orlando Roces (2nd from left) and Camarines Sur Gov. Luis Raymond Villafuerte. Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. is to Ms Arroyo's left. LYN RILLON

AFP grills 5 Faeldon supporters

From page A1

Faeldon's support in the military. There are others. I believe there will be more than five. It will depend on the outcome of the debriefing," Kison said.

Marine Privates Lorenzo Caranzo and Hardy Glaraga of the AFP Western Command based in Puerto Princesa City are being held at the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) compound in Camp Aguinaldo.

Three other enlisted personnel from Southern Command headquarters in Zamboanga City are also undergoing interrogation there.

But the military refused to identify the three, saying it was not the proper time to do so.

"We don't know yet if they are involved ... The debriefing is now being conducted by the AFP Counter Intelligence Group in Zamboanga," said Kison.

Released mutineers

"The common denominator we're looking at is the possibility that they are among the 184 soldiers who were part of the Oakwood mutiny," he said.

The 184 Magdalo soldiers were released in May 2005 after they struck a plea bargain with military prosecutors. They accepted a three-rank demotion and a pay cut for six months in exchange for the dismissal of court-martial charges against them.

Kison justified the interrogation, saying under military law the five soldiers could be detained even though charges had not been filed against them.

Asked by reporters what the detained soldiers had revealed so far, Kison said results of the debriefing had not been released.

On Wednesday, Caranzo and Glaraga were flown to Camp Aguinaldo from Wescom headquarters, one of the four military camps that Faeldon reportedly visited after his Dec. 14 escape.

The three others being interrogated were assigned to Southcom headquarters, which Faeldon was also able to penetrate despite a nationwide manhunt for him.

Links to plot probed

Kison said the soldiers were also being investigated to determine if they were part of the reported coup plot.

"If there are indications that they are part of the plot, of the recruitment, then the necessary action would be conducted by our intelligence and counterintelligence units," he said.

Kison said Faeldon did not directly implicate the soldiers, adding that Afpcig was counterchecking its previous findings with Faeldon's statements.

He said pictures were also recovered from Faeldon. He did not elaborate.

"During the investigation other names may come out. There may be other findings that will lead to other accused, and that's the focus of the Afpcig which is very active on this," Kison said.

Faeldon had also taken videos and pictures of himself at the Camp Crame police general headquarters in Quezon City, the Central Command headquarters in Cebu City and the Camp Aguinaldo military general headquarters itself.

He posted the videos and pictures on his website www.pilipino.org.ph where he announced he was launching a civil disobedience campaign against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Rivas, a military prosecutor, was transferred on Wednesday from the Isafp compound to the Headquarters Support Command office inside Camp Aguinaldo.

So far, she has not yet met with her family.

Kison said military lawyers had not determined the "extent of her participation ... so they cannot pinpoint the charges against her."

Court visit

Also yesterday, the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148 staff completed checks on 27 Magdalo mutineers, including Faeldon, detained in separate facilities after their lawyers expressed the fear that some of the detainees may have been tortured.

"In general, everyone seems OK," said clerk of court Nonilon Tagalicud. "They seemed relaxed. I was allowed to ask whatever questions I had, though there was a (military) escort during the visits," said the lawyer.

He declined to give details before he could report to the court. *With reports from Tarra V. Quismundo and Nikko Dizon*

Massive oil spill threatens white Boracay beaches

From page A1

added Santiago, chair of the Joint Congressional Power Commission.

Napocor president Cyril C. del Callar said that 250 workers had been mobilized to undertake the cleanup which would be completed in three months.

"We are doing everything within our abilities to contain the oil spill and make sure that there will be no major effects on the immediate environment," Del Callar said.

Bad weather

Del Callar blamed bad weather for the incident.

But Napocor spokesperson Dennis Gana said that conditions had improved for a favorable cleanup in coordination with the Philippine Coast Guard and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"The Coast Guard said in a briefing on Tuesday that the weather was favorable and the waves were going to the direction of Semirara and not Boracay," Gana said.

Del Callar said the workers had collected almost 5,700 sacks of oil that were dumped on a temporary site for immediate disposal.

17,000 sacks

Overall, more than 17,000 sacks of contaminated materials from both the shoreline and mangroves had been collected. About four hectares of the total mangrove area of the island had been cleared of oil, he said.

Power Barge 106 is now docked at the Keppel Shipyard in Batangas where it was towed following the accident. Contaminated oil was being removed prior to repairs.

Largest spill in RP

"This is probably the largest oil spill in the Philippines but Napocor is understating the damage. It hasn't reached Boracay but we'll never know with the undercurrent. You must remember that this is heavy crude oil," Angara said.

"And the cleanup has been very slow and very primitive," he added.

He said UP scientists had sent an investigative team and found out that 300 hectares of mangroves, sea grass and coral reefs had already been damaged.

"This is underreported in Manila but it is a big scandal in Panay," he said.

The oil spill occurred on Dec. 18 after the barge ran aground 200 meters off Sitio Bobog, Barangay Semirara, one of three villages of Semirara Island. Oil smudges splattered 5 km of the Semirara shoreline.

195,000 liters

Semirara is part of a group of nine islands of Caluya town, Antique, at the northern tip of Panay Island. It is the site of Semirara Mining Corp., the biggest coal mine in Asia.

A Coast Guard report said the barge was being towed by a tugboat to Oriental Mindoro from Masbate when it was battered by strong winds and waves. It was estimated to be carrying 800,000 liters of bunker oil.

Gana said in a telephone interview that at least 195,000 liters of bunker oil were spilled in the waters off Semirara.

But Santiago said Del Callar told her that only 30,000 liters spilled from the barge.

"I anticipated Senate action by asking (Del Callar) and he said that Napocor takes responsibility for the oil spill because both the sending and the receiving of the oil barge were Napocor facilities and this is a Napocor barge," she said.

"He said they have already released P50 million out of P90 million that Napocor has appropriated for the oil spill and have sought assistance from the Coast Guard and the military," she added.

Remedial measures

Santiago, quoting Del Callar, said that only 40 hectares of marine life, and not 236 hectares, had been affected by the oil spill.

However, the Senate committee on environment and natural resources, headed by Sen. Pia Cayetano, is set to investigate the oil spill and hear a proposed bill to increase penalties on polluters of the country's navigable waters.

"The problem with our many existing environmental laws is that they do not provide protective mechanisms to ensure that damages are paid to the local community and for the rehabilitation of the environment," Cayetano said in a statement.

The committee would also consider Cayetano's bill, SB 1802, which hikes the fine for marine polluters to P5 million from P10,000 to P200,000. It also increases the prison term for violators from the current 30 days to one year to eight to 12 years.

Soon on sale: 1-kg LPG with built-in burner

From page A1

will have a built-in burner that could be used to cook food directly.

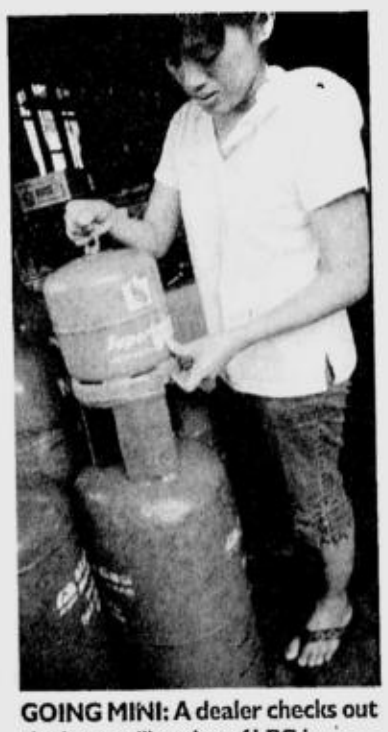
The introduction of the 1-kg LPG cylinders should enable even "the poorest of the poor" to avail themselves of LPG for everyday cooking, according to Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla.

After the increase in the value-added tax (VAT) rate to 12 percent from 10 percent on Feb. 1, an 11-kg LPG cylinder now sells for between P489.20 and P540.25.

Charcoal

The high cost of LPG, Lotilla said, had pushed a number of families to resort to using alternative fuels like charcoal.

He said alternative fuels would eat into the sales of LPG dealers because some households would rather turn to the less expensive fuels than buy cooking gas.



GOING MINI: A dealer checks out the best-selling size of LPG in these days of rising prices. ERIK ARAZAS

At present, dealers sell LPG in 11-kg cylinders.

Apart from the 11-kg tanks, oil refiner Petron Corp. also sells 7-kg and 2.7-kg cylinders, while Caltex Philippines Inc. offers 5-kg and 2.7-kg tanks.

Total (Philippines) Corp. has 5.5-kg and 2.7-kg cylinders, and Liquigaz Philippines Corp. sells 5-kg and 2.5-kg tanks. It also offers 9-kg tanks, but only in Batangas.

Nation Petroleum Corp. also sells 2.7-kg LPG tanks.

DOE data showed that a 7-kg tank sold for around P342, a 5.5-kg cylinder for P303, a 5-kg cylinder for between P245 and P251, and a 2.7-kg tank for between P148 and P164.

Prices to go down

Lotilla said LPG prices would go down after March, with the end of the winter season in the western hemisphere.

"We hope demand goes down by March," he said.

Even while expecting demand and prices to decline in two months, the DOE remained in constant touch with the country's LPG dealers, asking them to come up with ways to help make LPG more affordable to consumers.

"They're coming back on Wednesday (Feb. 8) to tell us how they can help meet the needs of the poorest families; if they can find a way to keep prices where they are or even bring these lower," he told reporters. "Another option is for oil companies to invest in smaller LPG tanks."

One option that was deemed not viable was for LPG dealers to sell only 8 kg of LPG in their existing 11-kg cylinders, he said.

The idea was junked as the cost of transporting a certain number of 11-kg tanks containing only 8 kg of cooking gas would be the same as that of transporting full 11-kg tanks.

Poorest of the poor

One option being considered is to have "the poorest of the poor" in every barangay go straight to the dealers for their LPG needs, Lotilla said.

This way, these households would not be subjected to the charges that middlemen impose on top of the dealer price of LPG, he said.

"But what we're trying to see is how we can implement it. We'll have something concrete by next week," he said.

To help workers cope with the impact of the higher VAT rate, the Employers Confederation of the Philippines yesterday urged Congress to hasten the passage of a law that would raise the threshold for income tax exemptions.

Ecop president Rene Y. Soriano said the proposed law, which has been approved at the House committee level, was aimed at restructuring the country's income tax system and raising tax exemptions for low- and middle-income earners.

Discontent

"Workers' take-home pay would have to be improved to enable them to cope with rising (prices of commodities)," Soriano said. "Adjusting the tax exemption is a way that would address this need without hurting the pockets of employers and businesses."

Ecop chair Miguel B. Varela said the measure was needed to stem the tide of discontent and prevent labor unrest.

A bill drafted by the Department of Finance seeks to exempt those with taxable incomes of up to P50,000 yearly. *With a report from Ronnel W. Domingo*

NEW police recruits stand at attention in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City, during ceremonies marking the Philippine National Police's 15th year. REM ZAMORA

All's well that ends well at PNP awards day

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Luige A. del Puerto

FOR TWO YEARS NOW, THE SOUTHern Police District (SPD) has earned the reputation of being Metro Manila's top police force.

SPD Director Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia credits the achievement to his men who "risk their lives to perform their jobs on the streets."

The SPD was recognized by the National Capital Region Police Office as the best police district in Metro Manila for 2005 as it marked the 15th anniversary of the Philippine National Police yesterday at Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City.

"I don't take the credit. It really belongs to them," Garcia said in an interview yesterday, adding that the increased police visibility in the seven cities in southern Metro Manila also proved effective in deterring the commission of heinous and petty crimes.

Garcia admitted that 2005 has been quite a rocky year for the SPD with violent incidents in the district like the bombing of a bus on Ayala on Valentine's Day that left four people dead and 60 people injured, the murder of career diplomat Alicia Ramos in her Makati house in April and the massacre of a family in Taguig in June.

"But we solved all these crimes with the arrest of the culprits," he said, adding that SPD's crime solution efficiency was tagged at 95 percent last year.

End to controversy

In a related development, Metro Manila's most senior police official yesterday told a police district that protesting the results of the annual competition was "childish."

But Director Vidal Querol clearly wanted the controversy to die down.

"Protesting through the media... was childish," said Querol, National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief. "If you want to be No. 1, you should work as one and work to be No. 1."

Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. had earlier protested the selection of the Manila Police District (MPD) as the top Metro Manila police force of 2005, saying the honor should have gone to the QCPD.

Querol said Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan, the head of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD), did not take up the issue with members of the committee which picked the winner.

"Supt. Radovan already said his piece and so did Mayor Belmonte, so that's the end of it," said Querol. "I'm supposed to be the father to this men. I don't want to be seen as fighting with my sons."

POSTCRIPT TO EXPLOSION

Court employees get bomb threats

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THREE DAYS AFTER A PILLBOX EXPLODED in front of their building on Orosa St., Manila, employees of the Court of Appeals (CA) received two bomb threats from unidentified callers early yesterday morning.

The Manila Police District's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Section (MPD-EODS) reported that a court security guard received a call at around 12:30 a.m. from an unidentified man who warned about explosives planted in the building.

Another court employee received a similar phone call a few hours later, prompting the police to check the building for bombs. They found nothing.

The police had earlier declared a Metrowide alert as a blast rocked the CA building last Monday. Authorities earlier discovered a bag containing dynamite sticks and blasting caps in the bag of construction worker Zaldy Munda, a passenger of Light Rail Transit Line-2. Munda told police the dynamite was intended for a fishpond project in Antipolo City. MPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, however, downplayed the explosion in front of the building, saying it was caused by a pillbox thrown by warring street gangs.

However, a group that called itself Tabak or Taong Bayan at Kawal ng Pilipinas immediately claimed responsibility for the incident, according to a television news report.

The group demanded the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Armed Forces chief Gen. Generoso Senga, and other military officials allegedly involved in the "Hello Garci" controversy.

In a separate incident, two vintage bombs were unearthed in two different sites by construction workers in Manila. A 105 mm unexploded explosive ordnance was dug up inside the Araullo High School campus on United Nations Avenue in Ermita, Manila, at around 3:15 p.m. Wednesday. Yesterday morning, an 81 mm mortar was also unearthed at 1230 Juaning St., Sampaloc, Manila.

The explosives were brought to the MPD headquarters for safekeeping and proper disposition.

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Arroceros forest park to remain closed – for now

By Tina G. Santos

THE CONTROVERSIAL ARROceros Forest Park in Manila will remain closed despite a plea from professional artists to reopen it to the public.

Luisa Quiñones, Division of City Schools Superintendent, said the park was closed for the public's safety because of the ongoing construction of a two-story building for teachers in the area.

"We're afraid that if we open it now, an accident might occur and we would be held responsible," she told the INQUIRER.

The park will be reopened as soon as work on the building is completed, Quiñones added.

Several professional artists had asked the city government to reopen the forest park, saying they draw inspiration from its lush foliage.

"I hope the city officials understand that and heed our plea," artist Leo Menses said.

He added that even their livelihood has been affected by the park's closure. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of their art work goes to Winner Foundation, the park caretaker.

Winner is locked in a court battle with the Manila City government. The foundation claims it has been given a 15-year contract to develop the park, but the local government said the contract is not valid.

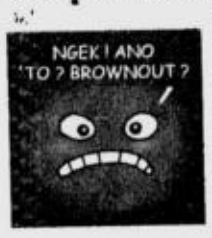
Meanwhile, Meneses and other artists said they will join the park clean-up drive, a project initiated by Winner, on Sunday.

Winner president Regina Paterno had earlier accused the city government of dumping garbage like metal scrap and old Christmas decorations inside the park.

"It could be the start of the forest's conversion into a dump," Paterno warned.

METROBRIEFS

Suspected wire thief nabbed in Navotas



THE STREETS leading to the Navotas Centennial Park were dark after a suspected thief cut the electrical wires of specially designed lanterns on M. Naval Street Wednesday night. "We were surprised to see the lantern lights go out. When we checked, we saw the suspect holding a bunch of electrical wires," said Willy Andaya, a barangay official. The fish-shaped lanterns were used during the town's centennial celebration two weeks ago, but Andaya said they decided to continue using the lights "because it's nice to look at and it represents the town's major industry." "We were supposed to bring the lights down in April or before the Holy Week for safekeeping, but now we have no choice but to buy replacement wires," he added. The suspected thief, Lito Dizon 45, a resident of Tanyong, Malabon City, was turned over to the police for investigation.

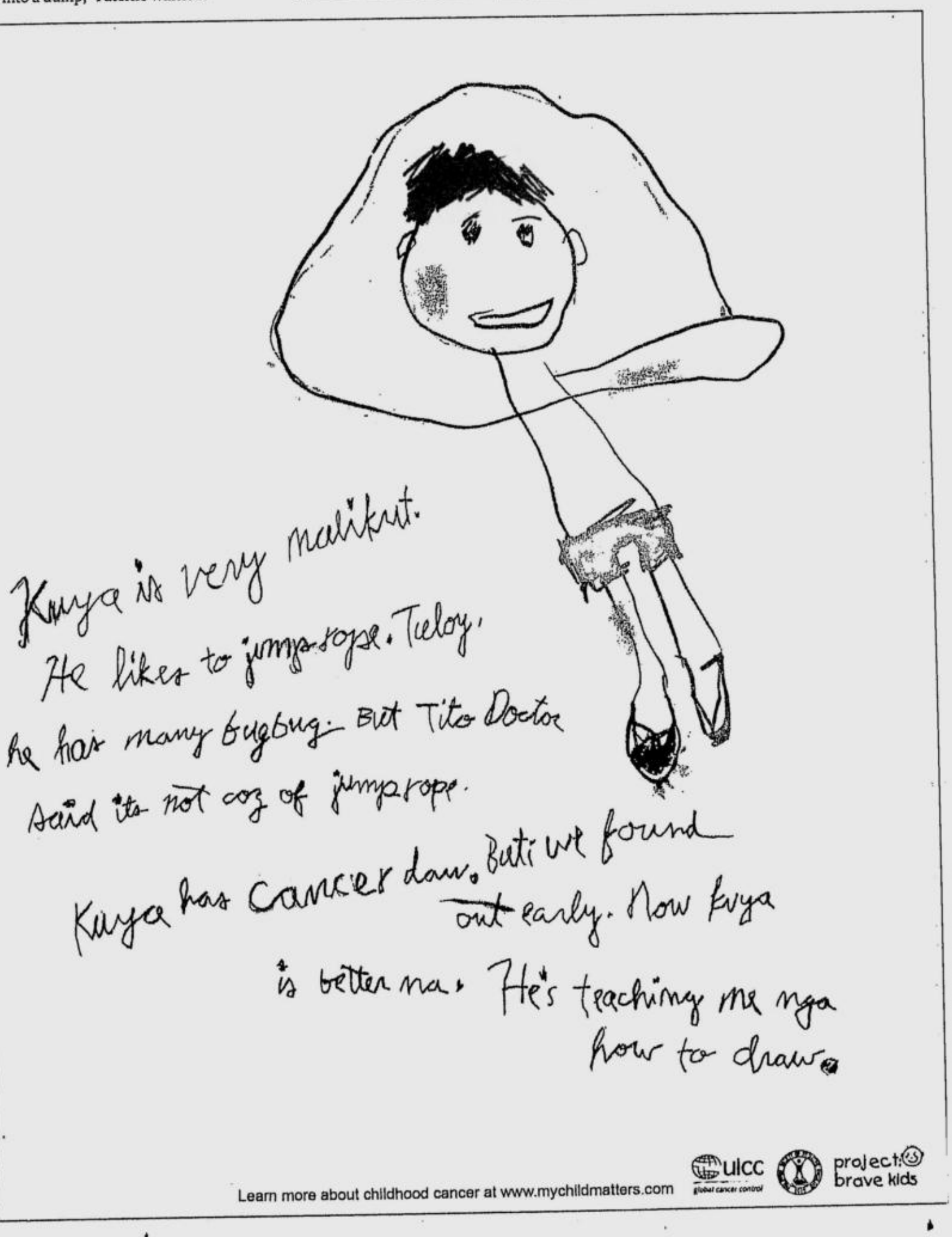
Nancy C. Carvajal

Makati opens world-class aqua center

THE COUNTRY'S financial center will inaugurate today the Makati Aqua Sports Center, a P67-million world-class facility with an Olympic-sized swimming pool." We would be inviting sports associations to try out the facility. The city would also organize swimming competitions to look for homegrown talents," said Joey Salgado, Makati Information and Community Relations Department chief. Located in Barangay West Rembo, right across the University of Makati, the 4,000-sq. m. swimming facility has an eight-lane, five-foot deep Olympic-sized pool, and a smaller four-foot deep "warm-up" pool.

Tarra V. Quismundo

NEW RTC JUDGE
Las Piñas City Regional Trial Court Judge Salvador V. Timbang Jr. (second from left) takes his oath of office before Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban. With them are members of Judge Timbang's family.



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8 nabbed in QC 'jueteng' raid

By Luige A. del Puerto and Jocelyn R. Uy

SEVERAL HOURS AFTER INSISTING that his district should have been adjudged the best Metro police district in 2005, the chief of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) was ordered to relieve one of his officers for jueteng.

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Vidal Querol on Wednesday night ordered QCPD director Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan to relieve Supt. Felicidad Gido, the head of the Fairview police station, for failing to stop jueteng in the area.

Hours before Gido's relief, a team from the NCRPO intelligence unit raided the Maligaya Parkland Subdivision at the boundary of Fairview and Novaliches and arrested eight people who were allegedly conducting a jueteng draw.

They were identified as Jomar Naz, Alberto Nacional, Maximo Oliveros, alleged bet collectors Winifredo Oreta, Rolito Viconia, Emilio Villaflor, Anna Lea Villanueva and bettor Antonio Bagane.

Supt. Sotero Ramos Jr., chief of the NCRPO's Regional Intelligence Special Operations Office (RISOO) which conducted the operation, said the suspects yielded eight pens, several lists containing jueteng bets, a calculator, and P4,140 in jueteng bets.

The suspects were placed in the custody of the RISOO. Charges of violation of the anti-jueteng law will be filed against them at the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

Following the police's "one strike policy" on jueteng, Querol ordered Radovan to relieve Gido.

"I have also warned the Quezon City Police District not to allow the return of jueteng," Querol said.

At least two other cities in Metro Manila are being closely monitored after reports about the resurgence of jueteng in the area reached the police.

Camp Crame officials, meanwhile, hailed the NCRPO for its swift action.

"Like we said, we are done with airing warnings against the failure to stamp out jueteng. Right now, what we'll do is to strike and strike hard," said Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson.

"This action by the NCRPO is very commendable and we expect the same from other regions," he said.

The chief of the Anti-Illegal Gambling Special Task Force said he received reports of jueteng activities in Quezon City a few days ago.

But his men had been busy operating in the countryside, said Chief Supt. Antonio Nanas, the head of the police's anti-jueteng strike force.

"*Naunahan kami, mabuti naman* (They beat us to it, and that's good)," he said.

The police's one strike policy in jueteng now extends to other similar forms of gambling, such as *masiao* and *suwertes* in Mindanao and video *karera* in Metro Manila.

Jueteng is said to be the source of millions in pesos in payoffs to local and national politicians, as well as junior and senior police officers. *With DJ Yap*

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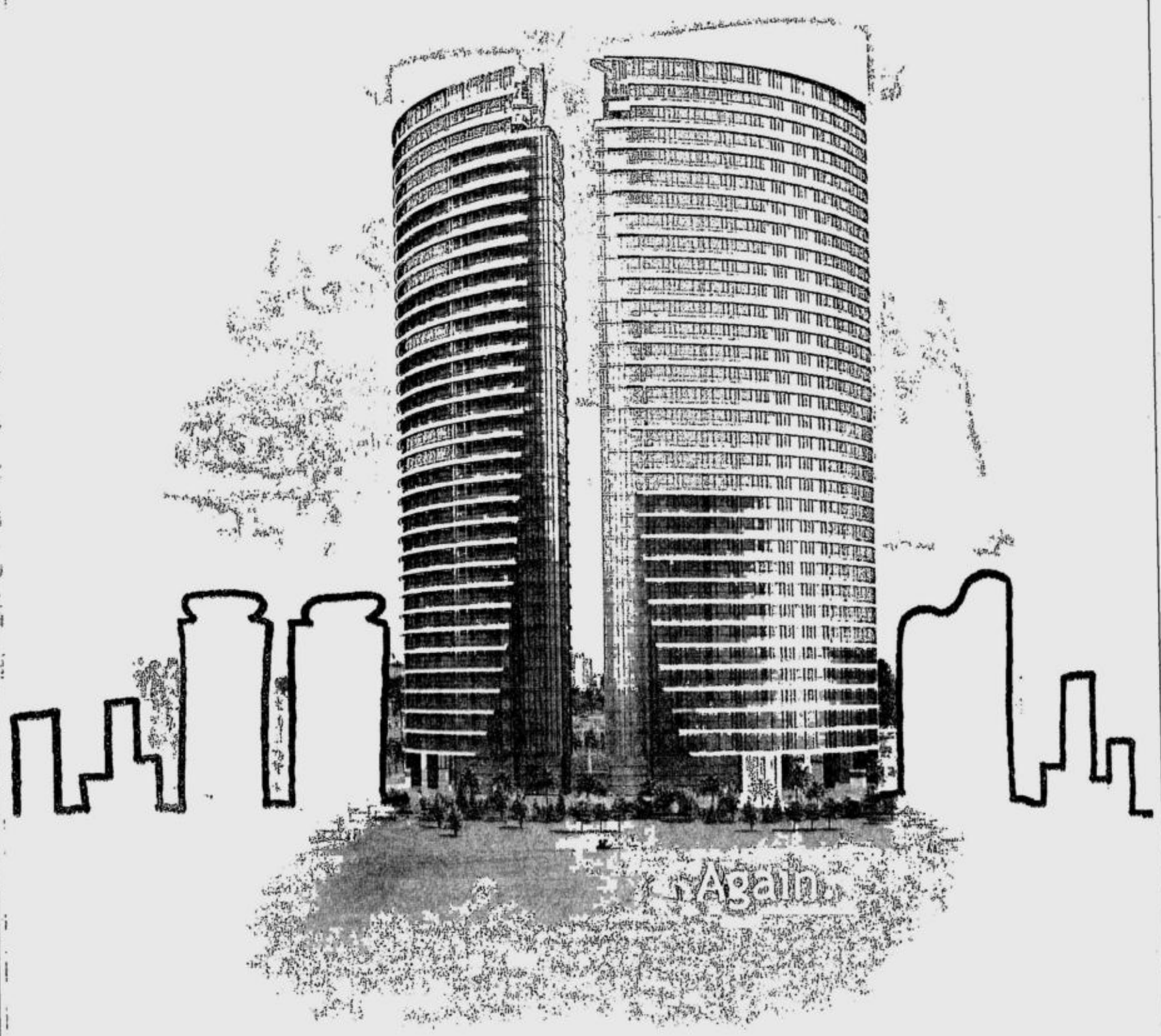

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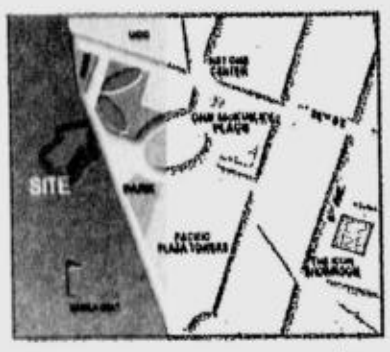

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Trader eludes carjackers

By DJ Yap

A BUSINESSMAN ESCAPED BEING LISTED as the latest "carjacking" victim in Quezon City after he sped away in panic from Armalite-wielding car thieves the other night.

Angelito Reyes, 47, was cruising along the Tandang Sora flyover on board his brand new Suzuki Swift at 9:30 p.m. Wednesday when he was stopped by a van and a car, police said.

A blue L-300 van cut him from the right, while a red Toyota Corolla blocked him at the rear, Reyes told Chief Insp. Rudy Jaraza, chief of the anti-carnapping unit of the Quezon City Police District.

A man alighted from the van and trained an Armalite at him, Reyes said. The suspect told him: "*Walang personalan. Kotse lang ang kailangan namin*. (Nothing personal. We just need the car)."

Gripped by fear, Reyes stepped on the accelerator and sped off, leaving his attackers behind, police said.

But the suspects gave chase, following him for several kilometers. They even opened fire at him at least thrice, Reyes said.

When Reyes turned right to Regalado Street, the suspects, apparently having given up, went the other way.

After Reyes was shown a police file on car thieves, he positively identified a man in a photo as the one who had threatened him.

Jaraza said the man, in his early 30s and heavily-built, belonged to the Madrigal Carnap Group, but declined to identify him .

Warehouse yields fake toothpaste

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI) seized half a million pesos worth of fake toothpaste during a raid on a warehouse in Binondo, Manila, last Monday.

NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division (IPRD) agents confiscated 13,680 boxes of 50 ml tubes of counterfeit Close-Up toothpaste from the warehouse at 286 Clavel St.

"This was the first time we conducted a raid on counterfeit toothpaste." NBI IPRD chief Jose Justo Yap said.

Charges of unfair competition are being readied against warehouse owner Alex Co, he added.

"The counterfeit products were imported from China," Yap told reporters, explaining that even the toothpaste boxes which showed smiling Filipino models were manufactured in China.

Agents of the NBI IPRD also seized P2 million worth of fake perfumes and cosmetics during simultaneous raids in Binondo earlier this month.

The NBI confiscated L'Oréal cosmetic products and 1,970 bottles of counterfeit perfumes with the brand names Giorgio Armani, Lancôme, Guy Laroche, and Ralph Lauren from Meowndes General Merchandise outlets at the New Divisoria and Juan Luna Plaza shopping malls. The owners, Kevin and Sholan Go, are facing charges of trademark infringement and unfair competition.

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SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

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Key Cabatu hits rescue Painters

Young standout forces OT, then nails winning basket as Rain or Shine takes Game 1

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE VETERAN RAIN OR SHINE CREW FOUND a young hero yesterday.

Junjun Cabatu buried a jumper at the buzzer to lift Rain or Shine to a 70-68 overtime victory over Magnolia Ice Cream in Game 1 of the PBL Heroes Cup title playoffs at the San Andres Gym.

GAMES SUNDAY (*San Andres Gym*)
2:30 p.m.—Achievement Awards
3:30 p.m.—Magnolia vs Rain or Shine (Game 2 Finals)

Cabatu, who nailed a three-pointer to force the extra period at 60-all, finished with a team-high 20 points as the Elasto Painters took a head start in the best-of-five series.

"He really wanted to win," said coach Caloy Garcia of the La Salle standout, whose father Sonny was known for anything but his shooting when he played for the RP team and later in the PBA in the 1980s.

"We had several options in the last play, but I also wanted it to be Junjun who'd get the ball."

Earlier, Granny Goose turned to Jett Latonio in the second half to subdue Harbour Centre, 87-81, and bag third place.

Latonio shot 20 of his 24 markers in the last two quarters to lead the Tortillos past the Portmasters, who missed the services of Joseph Yeo, who was said to be in sick bay.

The Painters trailed early in overtime, 60-66, after the Wizards opened the extension with a 6-0 spurt. But the seasoned Painters got a big boost from their young guns and closed in at 65-66.

Eugene Tan nailed a triple with 24.8 seconds to finally put the Painters on top, 68-66.

Mark Isip's jumper tied the game at 68 with 8.9 ticks left, until Cabatu struck on the next play.

Led by Cabatu, Erwin Sta. Maria and Ronjay Enrile, the Painters took a 55-45 edge in the fourth quarter before the Wizards orchestrated a 15-2 run to grab the upperhand at 57-60.

Cabatu then tied the game at 60-all with a triple with 56.8 ticks left.

The scores:

First Game

GRANNY GOOSE 87—Latonio 24, Cruz 12, Lanete 9, Grijaldo 7, Santos 6, David 6, Almeda 6, Ibanes 6, Doruelo 4, Gavino 3, Alfad 2, Saladaga 1, Ferrer 1, Concha 0.

HARBOUR CENTRE 81—Reyes 19, Dela Pena 12, Gaco 11, Luanzon 9, Mesina 8, Paterno 8, Tenorio 8, Arellano 2, Saguindel 2, Raymundo 2, Alonzo 0.

Quarters: 19-28, 42-42, 63-58, 87-81

Second Game

RAIN OR SHINE 70—Cabatu 20, Tan 11, Sta. Maria 10, Enrile 8, Ortiguerra 7, Sagad 6, Tangkay 6, Reyes 2, Aljamal 0.

MAGNOLIA 68—Williams 21, Santos 14, Valenzuela 12, Misolas 7, Chan 5, Rizada 4, Isip 4, Co 1, Jones 0, Angeles 0, Bombeo 0.

Quarters: 8-13, 31-28, 47-44, 60-60, 70-68

MAGNOLIA'S Kelly Williams pulls down the rebound off Rain or Shine's Jay-R Reyes. RYAN LIM

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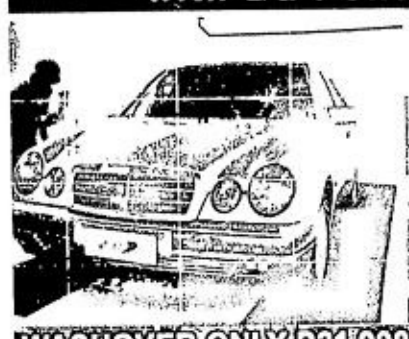

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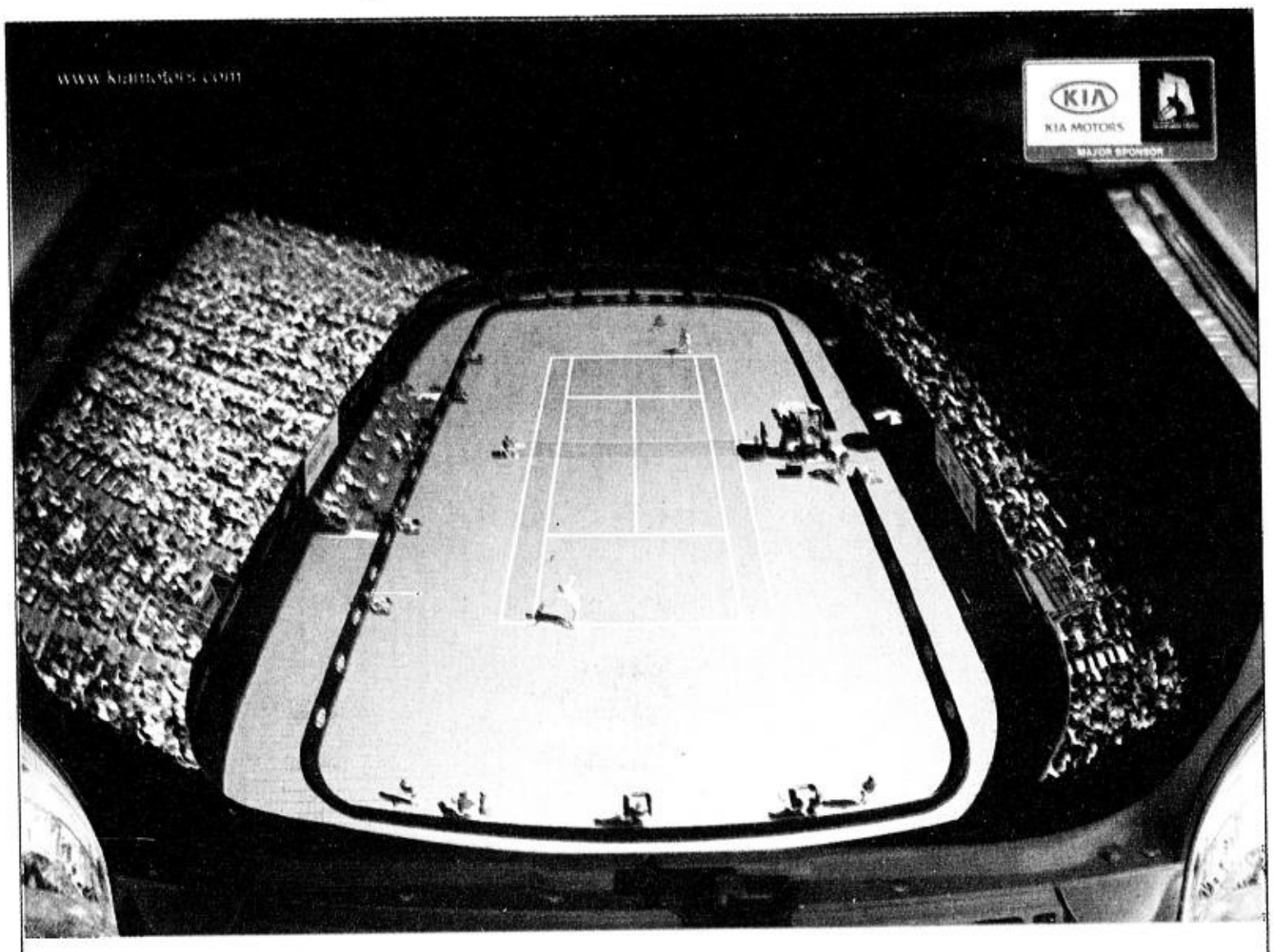

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Table tennis president Valbuena under fire

A BIG GROUP OF TABLE TENNIS COACHES, PLAYERS, club officers and regional directors have asked the Philippine Olympic Committee to oust Table Tennis Association of the Philippines (Tatap) president Victor Valbuena because his reelection was "illegal."

Led by Tatap directors Bax Paras (Region 4), Godofredo Uy (Region 5) and Nico Cawed (Baguio), the group which calls itself the Council for Reforms informed the POC in a petition letter on Thursday that there was no quorum when the Tatap polls was held.

"We're just waiting for his term to end last year, but we're surprised to learn that Valbuena was reelected without informing the recognized clubs and regional directors," said Oscar Santelices, a former Tatap secretary general and spokesman of the group.

"We just found out that they held an election without a quorum because there were no regional directors and club officers who were present there."

But Valbuena debunked the claims of the unified group, saying he was legally given a fresh mandate by the Tatap regional directors.

Valbuena explained that Santilices' bone of contention was that he wasn't recognized as Tatap president because former Tatap chief Rufino Go was still the association head in the books submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The group's letter was received by POC special assistant to the president Go Teng Kok on Thursday and the issue is expected to be tackled by the POC arbitration committee next week. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Taekwondo head blames test center for drug shame

By Musong R. Castillo

PHILIPPINE TAEKWONDO ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT Robert Aventajado yesterday branded as "useless" the drug-testing procedure of the Philippine Center for Sports Medicine and blamed the agency for Esther Marie Singson's flunking the World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) test recently.

Aventajado said that while Singson passed a PCSM test on Nov. 22, the Wada-accredited clinic in Beijing, China, later found the taekwondo gold medalist of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games to be positive for diuretics.

The substance is banned by the Wada because it can shield steroid or performance-enhancing drugs.

But PCSM head Dr. Raul Canlas said that the system has been in place for the past seven editions of the SEAG and that no untoward incident had ever happened on Filipino athletes.

"The PCSM held a series of seminars for national coaches six months before the Games," Canlas told the INQUIRER over the phone. "Those seminars were intended to warn them (athletes), and she (Singson) was warned [about taking banned drugs]. I have her coach's word."

Canlas declined to identify Singson's coach, one of many who attended the seminar. He said he had urged the mentors to tell their players not to "take anything unusual."

Singson, who insists she had made an "honest mistake," would lose her gold medal in taekwondo if the SEAG Federation refused to accept her alibi.

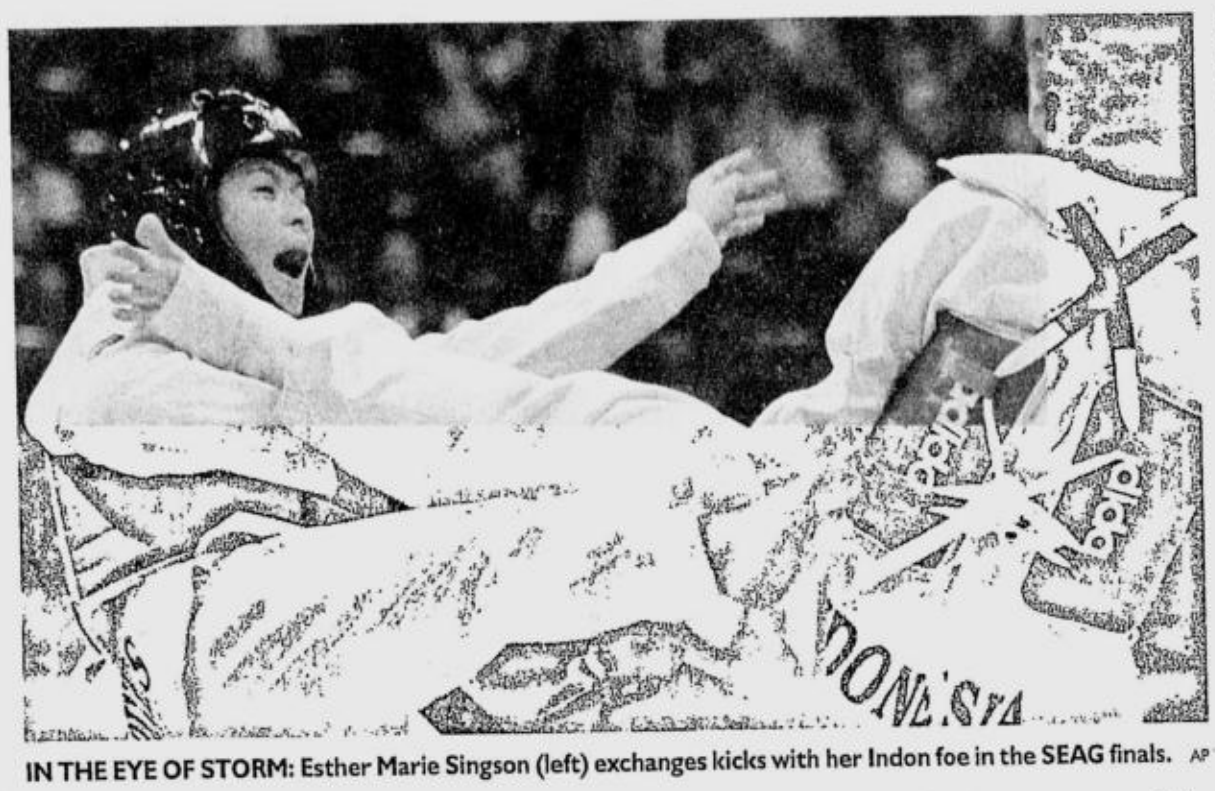
The banned substance was found in a weight-reducing tea that Singson took last October so she would make the weight for the bantamweight category.

Meanwhile, Eski Ripoll, the conditioning and strengthening coach of the national taekwondo team, said that Singson did not tell anyone she took a brand of herbal slimming tea that is rich in diuretics.

The entire taekwondo team was quartered at the Ultra from Nov. 7 last year and Ripoll's wife, Christina—a health adviser, but not a full-time employee of the PTA—took care of the team's nutrition requirements.

In a related development, PTA vice-president Sung Chong Hong will fly to South Korea soon to attend the World Taekwondo Federation meeting and at the same time raise the case of Singson before the executive board, of which he is a member.

Drug cases in the WTF can mean suspensions, and Singson's case could merit a two-year ban from local and international competitions.



IN THE EYE OF STORM: Esther Marie Singson (left) exchanges kicks with her Indon foe in the SEAG finals. AP

Barako, Giants seek clinchers again today

AFTER MISSING THE championship bus for different reasons Wednesday, Red Bull Barako and Purefoods Chunkee go for the clincher anew in their respective semifinal series today in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Import James Penny returns for the Red Bull Barako when they try to nail down the decisive fourth win against the Barangay Ginebra Kings at 4:40 p.m. in Game 6 of their best-of-seven duel.

The Purefoods Giants, who fumbled away the potential winning basket in the dying seconds of Game 5, also go for the clincher again at 7:35 p.m. against the never-say-die Air21 Express.

"I'm sure, it will be a much tougher game come Friday," said Ginebra coach Siot Tanquingcen after the Kings pulled off a 97-83 win over the Barako, with Penny serving a one-game suspension as a result of two technical fouls in Game 5.

Red Bull had earlier won three straight after dropping the opener of the series in overtime.

Ginebra import Chris Porter will have to work even harder after turning in 27 points and 26 rebounds in Game 5, while Eric Menk and Rommel Adducul have to fight their way into the paint with Penny around.

"We'll try to take away their post offense and let them hit from the outside if they can," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao.

"You have to take a risk by either guarding the post and allowing the threes, or create more space for them by extending out—which could make you vulnerable to their big men."

GAMES TODAY
(Cuneta Astrodome)
4:40 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Red Bull
7:35 p.m.—Purefoods vs Air21

SERIES RESULTS
Game 1—Ginebra d. Red Bull, 105-100 (OT); Purefoods d. Air21, 94-89
Game 2—Red Bull d. Ginebra, 86-83; Purefoods d. Air21, 88-87
Game 3—Red Bull d. Ginebra, 93-85; Air21 d. Purefoods, 101-87
Game 4—Red Bull d. Ginebra, 88-85; Purefoods d. Air21, 100-90
Game 5—Ginebra d. Red Bull, 97-83; Air21 d. Purefoods, 100-99

Swim-or-sink match

The Express, on the other hand, will be playing their fourth swim-or-sink match of the conference after booting out San Miguel Beer and Talk 'N Text and avoiding elimination Wednesday night.

"This team rides on emotion and energy," said Air21 coach Bo Perasol. "It's always an advantage for us whenever our backs are against the wall."

But the Express are still around this time mainly because of luck.

After moving within a point at 100-99, the Giants had the potential game-winner in their hands in Game 5. But Roger Yap, who was free under the Purefoods basket, threw it away by fumbling a pass from Kerby Raymundo in the dying seconds of play. *June Navarro*

Pro-Am open to Asian Tour bets

JUVIC PAGUNSAN AND THE FOUR OTHER Filipino pros who made it to this year's Asian Tour may still join the 5th Konica Minolta National Pro-Am on Feb. 7-11 at Riviera's Langer.

Pagunsan, who qualified for this year's Asian Tour after a distinguished stint as an amateur, has been a participant in the annual event since 2001 with his father, Juanito, as the pro.

This year, however, Juvic has to team up with an amateur with an index handicap of 5 or higher in the Feb. 8-11 tournament.

Angelo Que, Gerald Rosales, Frankie Miñoza and Jerome Delariarte also made it to this year's Asian Tour. Like Pagunsan, they may tap amateurs with indices of 5 or higher as partners in the event presented by U-Bix Corp. chair Bert Bravo which stakes a record pot of P1.7 million and two Toyota Innovas as hole-in-one prizes.

Miñoza is expected to miss today's deadline, however, since he is listed among the entries in the Johnnie Walker Classic in Australia set Feb. 9-12.

"Everybody is welcome, for as long as everybody complies with the rules of the tournament," said Bravo, who co-chairs the executive committee with Benny Gopez, the president of the National Golf Association of the Philippines.

Gerard Cantada and JR Tanpinco are gunning for a historic third straight victory.

Milo Marathon Tagbilaran leg fires off Sunday

MORE THAN 4,000 RUNNERS ARE EXPECTED at the starting line when Tagbilaran City holds the 21K elimination leg of the National Milo Marathon for the first time on Sunday.

The 30th year of the country's biggest and longest-running foot race is staging what is actually the second leg of the qualifying series in its maiden visit to the picturesque island of Bohol.

Slots in the grand finals to be held in Metro Manila on Dec. 10, plus the lion's share of the cash pot of P144,600 await the top three finishers in the 21K men's and women's races.

Organizers said prizes will also be given out to the top 10 finishers in the 5K fun run and the Kiddies 3K age-group race of the weekly event held in partnership with Cebu Pacific, Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Adidas and Powerbar.

Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado will fire the starting gun for the 21K event, while Tagbilaran Mayor Dan Lim and Vice Gov. Julius Caesar Herrera will send off the runners in the 5K and 3K races.

National sports commissioner Ambrosio de Luna will help award the prizes.

Milo jackets, caps, basketballs, a cell phone and P15,000 cash will be raffled off on race day.

Local organizers Dionisio Balite, a member of the Bohol provincial board, and Joel Rosario are advising all participants to be at the starting area before 5 a.m. on Sunday for the final briefing.

The kick-off leg in Kidapawan City last Sunday drew 4,465 runners, and Milo Sports Events executive Pat Goc-Ong said they are targeting about 182,000 participants in this season's 30 legs, including the 42K grand finale.

Ateneo-La Salle poker slated

THE FIRST Ateneo-La Salle Poker Challenge, billed as "Blue vs Green Poker Tournament," has been set for Feb. 25 at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque. Registration starts at 1 p.m., an hour before the start of the tournament, which will be held under the auspices of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. The event is open to all alumni of the two schools. For inquiries, call 0917-8509406.

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila 1308

PHYSICAL RESOURCES DISPOSAL COMMITTEE
INVITATION TO BID

The GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM invites interested buyers who have the capability and engage on similar business to submit sealed proposals for the sale of Steel Tower on "AS IS, WHERE IS" basis to be conducted on February 17, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. at the Physical Resources Lounge, Level 1, Core B, New GSIS Headquarters Building, Pasay City. A pre-bidding conference will be held on February 15, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. (the same venue).

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MIN. BID
One (1) unit	Steel Tower	Philcomcen Building Ortigas Ave., Pasig City	P2,323,648.00

The above item may be inspected at the Philcomcen Building, Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City during office hours. For inquiries, you may call Engr. Raymundo R. Caguioa Jr. or Mr. Ernesto Lopez at Tel. No. 891-62-95 or visit them at the Materials Management Department, Level 1, GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City. Official Bid Form will be issued upon submission of current Business / Mayor's Permit and payment of P100. 00 for the document.

Sealed bid shall be accompanied by refundable cash bid security equivalent to 10% of the total amount of the bid. Manager's, Cashier's or Certified Checks shall be accepted as cash.

The GSIS/PRDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects or informality of the bids received, to accept the bid most advantageous to the System; and does not guarantee that an award will be made. The decision of the GSIS/PRDC in this regard shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) ERIC BABAR ZERRUDO
Chairperson

(PDI – February 3 & 5, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region - 10
Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City

NOTICE OF CORNGRAINS SALE THROUGH AUCTION

The National Food Authority, Cagayan de Oro City (NFA-10) wishes to invite all corn users to participate in the sale of Yellow Corngrains (YGN) and White Corngrains (WGN) through Auction in the following NFA-Warehouses under the jurisdiction of NFA-Bukidnon as follows:

LOT NO.	NAME OF WAREHOUSE/ LOCATION	VOLUME (In kg) MORE OR LESS	VARIETY/ COMMODITY CODE	FLOOR RICE per kg EX-WHSE INCLUDING CONTAINER (In Php)
1	GID AGLAYAN, MALAYBALAY, BUKIDNON	11,806.00	YGN	8.60
2	GID MUSUAN, MARAMAG, BUKIDNON	41,122.70	YGN	8.50
	GID MARAMAG, MARAMAG, BUKIDNON	63,586.18	YGN	
3	GID KALILANGAN, KALILANGAN, BUKIDNON	87,778.99	YGN	8.30
4	GID WAO, WAO, LANAO SUR	259,502.03	YGN	8.20
5	GID AGLAYAN, MALAYBALAY, BUKIDNON	13,726.52	WGN	8.60
6	GID MUSUAN, MARAMAG, BUKIDNON	33,575.72	WGN	8.50
	GID MARAMAG, MARAMAG, BUKIDNON	25,812.86	WGN	
7	GID KALILANGAN, KALILANGAN, BUKIDNON	437,424.57	WGN	8.30
8	GID WAO, WAO, LANAO SUR	29,969.55	WGN	8.20

Qualified Buyers:
1. All Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) registered corn users and processors, and NFA registered poultry & hog raisers, processors and feed millers.
2. NFA licensed Corn Users/Corn Millers/Corn Processors.
3. An authorized representative shall be allowed to participate in the bidding provided he/she is covered by a notarized Special Power of Attorney for sole proprietorship and Board Resolution for partnership/cooperative certifying that he/she is presently connected with the entity as an official employee/stock holder and is authorized to represent the same in the bidding.

The Corngrains stocks are stored in warehouses under NFA-Bukidnon jurisdiction with its corresponding floor price/kg on whole lot, "as-is-where-is, no selection basis"

All interested offerors are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the total amount offered in the form of Cash, Demand Draft, Manager's Check/Cashier's Check issued by a reputable Cagayan de Oro City bank payable to NFA

Terms and Conditions, and Bid Forms will be available at BAC Secretariat, NFA, Regional Office 10, Cagayan de Oro City after payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 The NFA encourages all interested offerors to conduct an ocular inspection of the subject stocks prior to the auction.

Schedule of Activities:

	ACTIVITIES	DATE	TIME	VENUE
1	Issuance of Bid Documents	February 02-07, 2006 (working days only)	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	2nd Floor, Conference Room, NFA-Regional Office 10, Cagayan de Oro City
2	Pre-Auction	February 08, 2006	10:00 AM	
3.	Deadline for Submission of Bids	February 10, 2006	10.00 AM	
4.	Opening of Bids	February 10, 2006	10:05 AM	

The National Food Authority, Region 10 assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders of any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The National Food Authority, Region 10 reserves the right to reject any or all offers, to waive any defect or informality found therein, and accept only such offers, which in its judgment, are most reasonable and advantageous to the NFA

(Sgd.) CAMILO D. MAGTRAYO
Asst. Reg'l Director/Chairman, BAC-10

(PDI Feb 2 & 3 2006)

Roberto, Korean pace Southern Ladies

ROBERTO: Equivalent to 4-under 68

LORA ROBERTO AND KOREAN CRYSTAL Chin fired 4-under par 68s yesterday for 58 points under the Molave scoring system to share the lead at the start of the 43rd Southern Ladies Open in Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon.

Roberto, spearhead of the Manila Southwoods squad, flashed solid putting form at the Del Monte Golf Club here, sinking five birdies inside eight feet to cushion a bogey on the par-3 No. 7.

"It will be a question of putting since the surface is difficult," said Roberto, eyeing a second crown in three years after ruling the Bacolod edition of this annual event in 2004. "The greens are wide but very tricky."

Roberto and Shin took a one-point lead over another Korean, Park Sung-hyun, in the 54-hole event sponsored by Petron Corp., DHL Worldwide Express/WWW Express, Gopez Corp. and Hans Bruhmann Int'l. Jeweller.

The two Koreans exploited their familiarity of the course, having stayed here for months, in a bid to dominate the event.

Aileen Rose Yao, one of the veteran campaigners here, shot 55 points for solo fourth.

Teener Mia Piccio came through with 54 points like Lovelyn Guioguio to lead the charge of the youth brigade while Crystal Superal, another jungolfer, and Chihiro Ikeda fired 53 points apiece under the scoring system that gives 4 points for a birdie, 3 for par, 2 for bogey and 1 point for a double-bogey.

Eva Miñoza had 51 points while 2003 champion Lina de Guzman made 50 like Jyra Mae Wong, Cyna Rodriguez, Anya Tanpinco and Carmelette Villaroman.

Claudine Garcia shot 46 points for a 4-point lead in Class A over Nene Guioguio; Mina Gillott and Inday Tan scored 32 points each to share the Class B lead; Joyce Duque and Bernadette Jalosjos each fired 34 points to show the way in Class C; while Ervina Wilkenson led Class D with 26 points.

S'woods PAL Interclub top pick

DAVAO CITY—MANILA SOUTHwoods and Luisita are the teams to watch when the Philippine Airlines Interclub golf tournament fires off in three tough courses here later this month.

Defending champion Manila Southwoods is favored to win its second straight men's championship in the 59th Interclub battles set Feb. 22-25 at the Apo Golf and Country Club and the Palos Verdes Golf and Country Club.

The tournament, considered as the country's national clubs championship, actually begins Feb. 17 with the staging of the 19th Seniors Interclub competitions at the Lanang Golf and Country Club, and at Apo.

BIBAT

Luisita is tipped to capture its sixth consecutive Seniors title in the event limited to players who are at least 55 years old.

The traditional hitting of ceremonial drives on Feb. 16 will officially start the Seniors championship that PAL launched in 1988.

Thus far, 71 teams have signed up for the Seniors Interclub.

An international field of 73 clubs are listed in the centerpiece men's regular event.

ABS-CBN International, Airbus, Boeing, INQ7, Joey 92.3, Royal Caribbean International, People Asia magazine, Premier Wine and Spirits, Rudy Project, and UMBN are the major sponsors. Fortune Tobacco, GE Aircraft Engines and Radio Mindanao Network are the corporate backers, while 96.3 WRock, Century Park Hotel and Asia Brewery are the other supporters.

Canlubang is expected to challenge the Michael Bibat-led Manila Southwoods for supremacy in the regular Championship division.

Other titles to be disputed in both the regular and Seniors events are the Founders, Sportswriters and Friendship divisions.

SPORTSWATCH

Ateneo Basketball League

THE 2006 season of the Ateneo Basketball League will be ongoing until March 18. There are 151 teams in 24 divisions with player ages ranging from 7 to 50 years old. Games are held on weekends at the Ateneo de Manila, Reyes Gym, Meralco, Club 650, and D-Zone. For more information, log on to www.abl-ph.com or contact Chiqui Paterno, director-MPG Inc. at 635-3257, 0917-5337778 or e-mail abl@admu.edu.ph. Principal sponsors of ABL 2006 include Snickers Chocolate, Cheetos, Gatorade, San Miguel Beer and Molten GG7.

Makati derby starts Feb. 8

A GUARANTEED prize of P200,000 will be at stake in a special 3-cock derby on Feb. 8 at the air-conditioned Makati Coliseum. Sponsor is B-Meg Derby Ace. To be hosted by WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp., the event is a follow-up to the 3-cocker last Jan. 30 which lured 42 entries. Entry fee is P5,500. Meanwhile, the new schedule of Summer Salpukan 6-cock derby will be on April 26, 29, May 2, 4, 6, 11 and 13. It will also be hosted by Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co of WTJ. Call 896-3545 and 895-6475.

PCC derby resumes

THE SHOWDOWN of cockers resumes today at Pasay City Cockpit with a 4-cock derby featuring more than 60 fights. Derby hosts Mamad and Dodie Villarubio, who are both members of the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA), said P300,000 is at stake in the event sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Among those entered are Ramon Mancenares, Lito Roque, Gold Cup entry, Walter Villanueva, Cito Manansala, Butchoy Olano, Boy Valenzuela, Lito Alcantara, Rolly Ligon, Joel Fernando, Pepito Ngo, Boy Layag and Bobby Doromal. Two more 4-cockers are set on Feb. 10 (Lito Alcantara and Boy Valenzuela) and Feb. 17 (3rd PCCA). Call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Ort/Tri)—Sweet Serenade (2), Mini Skirt (4) Chances Are (5), Dalli (6)

Race 2—(Ort/Tri)—Clear Stone, Quant Je Puis (3) Cartada Nueve (7), Silent Operator (1)

Race 3—(Ort/Tri)—Man Power (3), Golden Fantasy (6), U Are My Sunshine (5), Speed Majesty (4)

Race 4—(Penta/Tri)—Mika's Dream (7), Sharp Cookie (9), C Tonet (8), Chabacana (2), Distinctive Dancer (4)

Race 5—Crowning Glory (2), Sharon's Cookie (1)

Race 6—(Penta/Tri)—Astimegoesby (6), En Carla (3), Sovereign Dancer (8), Bold Lucky (2), Naughty (4)

Race 7—(Ort/Tri)—Better Strike (3), Queen's Abbey (1), War Hero (2), Mutiara (4)

Race 8—(Ort/Tri)—Real Black (3), Ilocos Pride (8), Striker (6), Smile Of The Wind (7)

Race 9—(Super/Ort/Tri)—Dazzling Affair (10), Wrecking Ball (1), Time Enchanted (2), D'Joy Of The Wild (7)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No 893-1320, Local 5291 / 5288

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

	Approved Budget
5KV and 15KV Medium Voltage Switchgears under FGJ 50986	*PHP 2,525,000.00*
Two Hundred Eighty (280) Cubic Meters Liquid Caustic Soda under GT 517414	*PHP 4,650,000.00*

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance upon payment of a non-refundable fee at the above address based on the following schedules:

PR No.	Date of Issue	Cost per Document	Contact Person
FGJ 50986	February 03, 2006	PHP 400.00	Mr. Harold T. Fonbitas loc. 5291
GT 517414	February 03, 2006	PHP 400.00	Mr. Anthony E. Ciriaco loc. 5286

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall also be held on February 10, 2006 for FGJ 50986 and GT 517414, 2:00 p.m. at the above address. Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Procurement Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than 2:00 p.m. (Procurement Department Wall Clock Time) of February 24, 2006 for FGJ 50986 and GT 517414. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Feb. 3 & 9, 2006)

MAKATI (SPORTS) CLUB, INC.
NOTICE OF AUCTION SALE

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Makati (Sports) Club, Inc. has approved the sale by auction of the shares of the following individuals/corporate stockholders:

STOCKHOLDER	ADDRESS	SC. NO.
1. Times Surety and Insurance Co., Inc. (1531)	AFC Bldg.,102 L.P. Leviste Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City	A-1367
2. Centennial Realty Corporation (0241)	C/O Col. Bustos, 2403 Asia Tower, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	A-1690
3. Magdaleno M. Peña (0273)	Philippine Racing Club Sta. Ana Park, Makati City 1200	A-2457
4. Reynolds Philippines Corporation (1493)	G/F, Fenics Bldg., Avocado Rd., FTI Taguig, Metro Manila 1632	A-2280
5. Masuda Marine Corporation (1902)	C/O Mr. Generandy M. Diaz Mercator Finance Corporation, 15/F, Trident Towers, 312 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City	A-2189
6. Maria Aurora E. Ceniza (0093)	48 Doña Juana Townhomes, C.Raymundo Avenue, Maybunga, Pasig City 1607	A-2523
7. California Mfg. Company (1187)	Km.18 East Service Road South Super Highway Paranaque City	A-2109
8. Melvin S. Martin (0699)	Martin and Associates, Inc., Unit 204, Makati Cinema Square Tower, Pasong Tamo, Makati City 1231	A-429
9. Lino P. Nepomuceno (0739)	42 Galaxy St., Bel-Air IV Village, Makati City 1209	A-943
10. Consolidated Industrial Gases Inc.(1369)	1 Pololaine St.Francis Subd. Cainta Rizal	A-1720
11. Chanton Management & Development Corporation (1551)	JMA Mining Corporation, 9622 Kamagong St., Makati City	A-1794
12. Ernesto G. Teopacio (1033)	10 Joaquin St. Corinthian Gardens Quezon City	A-801
13. Rudy S. Labos & Associates (0307)	Rm. 111 Casman Bldg., 1198 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City	A-2160
14. Oscar Reyes (0869)	Le Triomphe Cond.,375 Dela Costa Salcedo Vill. Makati City	A-580
15. RFM Corporation(0474)	11 Kawayan North Forbes Mktl.City	A-1578
16. Man Holdings & Management Devt. Corp (0064)	10 / flr. Athenaeum Bldg. 160L.P Leviste St. Salcedo Village Mktl City	A-2207
17. Man Holdings & Management (1831)	10/flr. Athenaeum Bldg. 160 L.P.Leviste St. Salcedo Vill. Mktl City	B-1054
18. Cipriano C. Bautista (0123)	313 Gov. Pascual Street, Navotas, Metro Manila	B-104
19. La Campana Fabrica De Tabacos(1226)	8800 Abeja St. Makati City	B-308
20. Corporate Investment Phils., Inc. (1938)	22/F, Taipan Place, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	B-1083
21. Yusuki Sami (1916)	Embassy of Japan, 2627 Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	B-931
22. Ines M. Villareal (0343)	12 Jasmin St. Valle Verde II Pasig City	B-662
23. Pilipinas Kao Inc.(1414)	108A E.Rodriguez Jr. Ave.,Bagumbayan Quezon City	B-469
24. Union Insurance Society of Canton, Ltd. (0226)	7/F, Cattleya Bldg., 235 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	B-1149

The auction sale will be held on 23 February 2006 at 10:00 A.M. at the Club's Dasmariñas Room.

This announcement also serves as a notice and demand to the members/stockholders concerned that the auction of said shares may be avoided if they pay the overdue accounts at anytime during office hours before the auction sale.

ROGELIO U. MARASIGAN
Corporate Secretary

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR NO. DC2006-01-0002

ON THE MANDATE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OVER THE WHOLESALE ELECTRICITY SPOT MARKET AND THE AUTHORITY OF THE PHILIPPINE ELECTRICITY MARKET CORPORATION IN RELATION TO THE PREPARATION, ADOPTION AND FILING FOR APPROVAL OF THE PRICE DETERMINATION METHODOLOGY

WHEREAS, under Section 30 of Republic Act No. 9136 (otherwise known as the "Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001" or "EPIRA"), the Department of Energy ("DOE") is mandated to establish the wholesale electricity spot market ("WESM") composed of the wholesale electricity spot market participants.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Rule 9 Section 3(a) of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the EPIRA ("IRR"), the DOE is mandated to organize and establish the appropriate market design and governance structure of the wholesale electricity spot market.

WHEREAS, pursuant to its power to establish the WESM, Section 30 of EPIRA further provides that the DOE is responsible for (a) the formulation of the detailed rules for the WESM ("WESM Rules"), jointly with the electric power industry participants and (b) the constitution of the market operator which shall be an autonomous group responsible for the implementation of the WESM in accordance with the WESM Rules.

WHEREAS, on 28 June 28, 2002, the DOE, with the joint endorsement of electric power industry participants, issued Department Circular No. 2002-06-003 promulgating the WESM Rules, consistent with the provisions of Section 30 of EPIRA that:

(a) the rules shall reflect accepted economic principles and provide a level playing field to all electric power industry participants; and
(b) the rules shall provide, among others, procedures for:
  i. establishing the merit order dispatch instructions for each time period;
  ii. determining the market-clearing price for each time period;
  iii. administering the market, including criteria for admission to and termination from the market which includes security or performance bond requirements, voting rights of the participants, surveillance and assurance of compliance of the participants with the rules and the formation of the wholesale electricity spot market governing body;
  iv. prescribing guidelines for the market operation in system emergencies; and
  v. amending the rules.

WHEREAS, in November 2003, the DOE constituted the Autonomous Group Market Operator ("AGMO") with the incorporation of the Philippine Electricity Market Corporation ("PEMC").

WHEREAS, Section 30 of EPIRA states that the WESM Rules shall provide the mechanism for determining the price of electricity not covered by bilateral contracts between sellers and purchasers of electricity;

WHEREAS, Section 30 of EPIRA provides further that the price determination methodology contained in the WESM Rules shall be subject to the approval of the Energy Regulatory Commission ("ERC")

WHEREAS, on 30 November 2004, the DOE authorized the PEMC to file on its behalf the WESM Price Determination Methodology ("PDM") for the approval of the ERC, and to comply with all directives of the ERC in relation to the PDM.

WHEREAS, there is a need to clarify the scope of PEMC's authority to act on behalf of the DOE in relation to the preparation, adoption and filing for approval of the PDM with the ERC pursuant to the DOE's mandate as regards the design and structure of the WESM.

NOW, THEREFORE, premises considered, the DOE hereby adopts this Circular for purposes stated above and to provide guidance to PEMC in seeking the approval of the PDM:

Section 1. Objective of Wholesale Electricity Spot Market. Consistent with its mandate under Section 30 of EPIRA and, more particularly Rule 9, Section 3(a) of the IRR, the DOE adopted a WESM design and structure that is intended to establish a competitive, efficient, transparent and reliable market for electricity where:

(a) A level playing field exists among the participants;
(b) Trading of electricity is facilitated among participants within the spot market;
(c) Third parties are granted non-discriminatory access to the power system;
(d) Prices are governed as far as practicable by commercial and market forces; and
(e) Efficiency is encouraged.

Section 2. Components of Wholesale Electricity Spot Market. The following key components constitute the design of the WESM;

(a) Pricing
  i. Basic to any market design is the method and procedures for determining the price at which electricity will be sold or purchased in the wholesale electricity spot market.
  ii. The main objectives of the pricing method are to –
    1. Balance supply and demand;
    2. Provide the proper incentives, both short term and long term, to the buyers and sellers through the correct pricing signals;
    3. Prevent abuse of market power; and
    4. Manage congestion

(b) Scheduling and Dispatch
  i. This involves the process of determining the dispatch schedule for all facilities, which schedule shall be used by the system operator in providing central dispatch to all generation facilities and loads connected to the transmission system.
  ii. It is based on certain specified factors, such as pricing (economic dispatch) and transmission capacity and constraints (security-constrained dispatch).
  iii. In order to implement the dispatch schedule, there must be coordination between market operations and system operations. The market design establishes the procedures, processes or systems necessary to enable the market operator and system operator to coordinate their functions in relation to the spot market.
  iv. The need for coordination is emphasized by the fact that the centralized operation and maintenance of the transmission system and the grid in the restructured electricity industry is controlled by a single entity (initially the TRANSCO, eventually the private concessionaire selected in accordance with Republic Act No. 9136).

(c) Billing and Settlement

The market design should specify the procedures for determining the final settlement amounts to be paid by the market participants for their transactions in the wholesale electricity spot market and the procedures for billing and actual settlement of market transactions between the market operator and the market participants, as well as among market participants.

(d) Market Administration/Governance
  i. The governance of the market contemplates the processes by which decisions are made and implemented within the wholesale electricity spot market to ensure the attainment of the market's objectives.
  ii. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following –
    1. The terms and conditions by which entities may be authorized to participate in the spot market;
    2. A cost-effective framework for the resolution of disputes among market participants;
    3. Sanctions in case of a breach or violation of the market rules by a market participant; and
    4. Efficient, transparent and fair processes for amending the market rules.

Section 3. PEMC Submission of Price Determination Methodology. The PEMC is authorized to submit to the ERC, for evaluation and approval, the PDM which consists of the procedures for the determination of schedules and energy prices for the real time dispatch and for the week-ahead and day-ahead market projections. These procedures shall be expressed in a series of equations or mathematical algorithm that constitute the Market Dispatch Optimization Model (the "MDOM")

The MDOM shall contain and adhere to the market design features and principles contained in the WESM Rules, particularly those contained in WESM Rules 3.2 to 3.10, as follows —

a. WESM Rule 3.2 – Market Network Model, Trading Nodes and Pricing Zones;
b. WESM Rule 3.3 – Ancillary Services;
c. WESM Rule 3.4 – Market Trading Interval and Timetable;
d. WESM Rule 3.5 – Submission of Offers, Bids and Data;
e. WESM Rule 3.6 – Market Dispatch Optimization Model
f. WESM Rule 3.7 – Market Projections;
g. WESM Rule 3.8 – Scheduling and Dispatch Implementation;
h. WESM Rule 3.9 – Treatment of Load Shedding and Excess Generation; and
i. WESM Rule 3.10 – Determination of Market Prices.

Except for the MDOM, all the other components or elements of the WESM as described in Section 2 hereof are considered integral parts of the design and structure of the market and, thus, PEMC shall ensure that no changes are made to these components or elements without the prior approval of the DOE or as may be necessary pursuant to any amendments to the WESM Rules. However, PEMC is authorized to provide information or to expound on any issue or question from the public, the ERC or any other government agency as regards the non-PDM components of market design.

Section 4. DOE Responsibility. Notwithstanding the authority granted to PEMC under Section 3 above, the DOE shall retain overall responsibility for ensuring that the market design and structure, as embodied in the WESM Rules, shall achieve the objectives of the wholesale electricity spot market stated in Section 1 hereof.

Section 5. No amendment or repeal of existing laws. Nothing in this Department Circular shall be construed to amend, supplant, or repeal any of the mechanisms or institutions already existing or responsibilities already allocated and provided for under any existing law, rule or contract. However, to the extent necessary, previous issuances by this Department in relation to the subject matter herein shall be deemed amended accordingly.

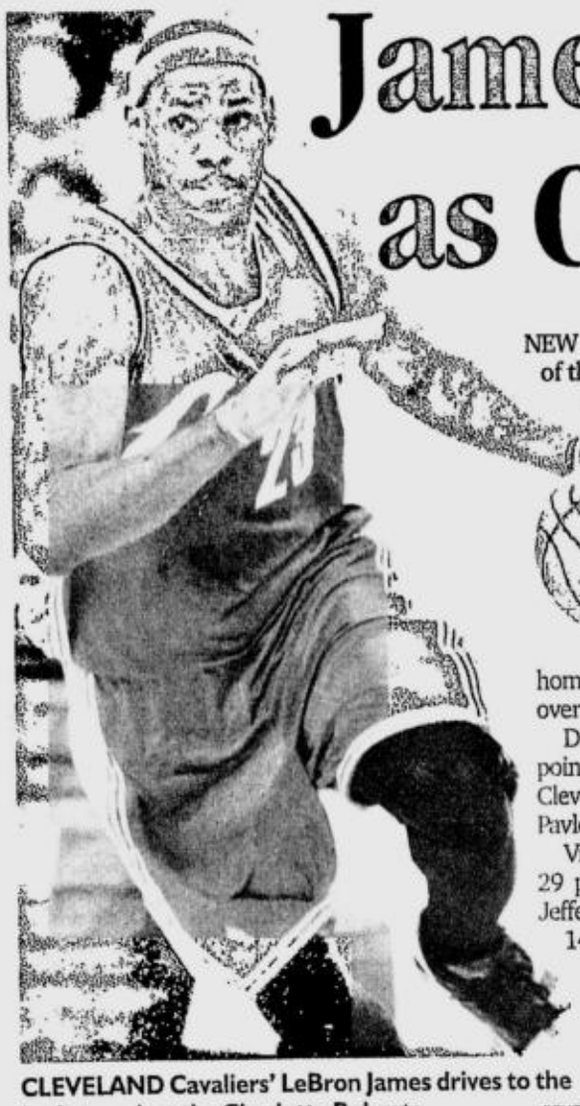
This Department Circular shall take effect immediately after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation and shall remain in effect until otherwise revoked.

Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, January 23, 2006.

RAPHAEL P. M. LOTILLA
Secretary

(PDI - February 3, 2006)

SPORTS



CLEVELAND Cavaliers' LeBron James drives to the basket against the Charlotte Bobcats. REUTERS

James does it all as Cavs rip Nets

NEW YORK—LEBRON JAMES RECORDED HIS THIRD TRIPLE-DOUBLE of the season and seventh of his career to inspire the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 91-85 victory over the New Jersey Nets on Wednesday, extending their winning streak to seven games.

James bagged 26 points, pulled down 11 rebounds and dished out 10 assists in front of the home fans to claim their first win over the Nets in six meetings.

Drew Gooden contributed 18 points and six rebounds to the Cleveland cause while Sasha Pavlovic had 14 points.

Vince Carter bagged a game-high 29 points for New Jersey, Richard Jefferson added 19 and Jason Kidd 14 but the Nets could not follow up their impressive win over league-leading Detroit on Tuesday, absorbing their fifth loss in six games.

The two teams headed into the final 12 minutes deadlocked at 62-62.

In Indianapolis, Peja Stojakovic scored 26 points and grabbed 13 rebounds on his home debut in leading the Indiana Pacers to a 105-79 rout of the Los Angeles Lakers.

In Auburn Hills, Richard Hamilton bagged 21 points and Tayshaun Prince added 20 as the Detroit Pistons routed the Minnesota Timberwolves, 90-74.

Meanwhile, Australian forward Andrew Bogut of Milwaukee and Dwight Howard of Orlando led a list of 19 players selected for the Rookie Challenge in Houston as part of the NBA All-Star weekend on Feb. 17. Bogut was the No. 1 draft choice in 2005 and Howard had that honor in 2004. *Reuters*

SOLAR Sports will air the Cleveland-Miami game at 9 a.m with a replay at 8 p.m.

Tiger back on the prowl in Dubai

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIrates—Tiger Woods put his clubs away, forgot about golf as best he could and concentrated on his vacation.

He's ready to get back to work.

Woods won the Buick Invitational in a playoff Sunday in San Diego, his first tournament of the season after a six-week break—the longest of his career. Now, after a 20-hour flight to the Persian Gulf, he'll make a third attempt at winning the Dubai Desert Classic, which begins play Thursday.

He reportedly is being paid about $3 million to play in one of the flagship events of the PGA European Tour. The entire purse for the event is $2.4 million.

The Emirates Golf Course is a palm-lined oasis in the middle of Dubai, a booming city of 1.5 million. In 2001, Woods lost on the 72nd hole to Thomas Bjorn. In 2004, he finished five strokes behind winner and Florida neighbor Mark O'Meara.

During his break, Woods went more than three weeks without touching a club. He stayed home, spent time with his wife, Elin, and went skiing with O'Meara and his family. *AP*

Officiating, 'suspension' rule hit

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

FOR THE BETTER PART OF THE 2005-2006 season, fans of the Philippine Basketball Association have started coming back to watch the ongoing San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference, a good sign for the beleaguered play-for-pay league which has been suffering from dwindling attendance the last two years.

But I'm worried that this newfound upsurge in attendance would deteriorate for two reasons: One, the mounting complaints against sloppy officiating and two, the new rule on automatic suspension on a player following his ejection on two technical fouls.

On the matter of sloppy officiating, PBA commissioner Noli Eala should not only flex his muscle by directing the referees to be always spotlessly clean and honest. He should also punish those who commit clear mistakes in this crucial stage of the semifinal series so that the public won't suspect that these whistle-totters are under the influence of unscrupulous people.

Regarding the automatic suspension slapped on a player ejected on two technical fouls, many say, and I agree, that this rule is ambiguous and could be interpreted and/or understood in two or more ways.

As Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao said (on the one-game suspension of import James Penny on two technicals), "The first technical foul was uncalled for. He (Penny) was only going to block a shot by (Mark) Caguioa. It was a legitimate intent to block a shot and there was no intent to hurt." On the second technical foul, Guiao said, "We reviewed the tape and it showed that Penny just extended his foot on the side of Caguioa. Again, there was no malicious attempt to hurt."

Playing without Penny in Game 5 last Wednesday, Red Bull lost to Ginebra. In my view, last Wednesday's outcome was proof enough that a team sans an import would be greatly disadvantaged, not to mention the fact that the game became less exciting and the result more predictable.

However, Eala said that based on existing PBA rules, the ejection merits an automatic one-game suspension. "I don't see a compelling reason to disturb the rules."

According to basketball diehards, the decision to impose a one-game suspension on Penny was grossly unfair and too harsh. They stressed that Penny did not even deliver a single blow at anybody; not a single player (from both Red Bull and Ginebra) was hurt; and there was not even a melee. If some people got pissed off about that, then they have a problem. "They need to look in the mirror," they said.

As a longtime PBA fan, I can say that among the imports who have strutted their savvy here, Penny and Shawn Daniels (of Air21) are the most behaved, hard-working and level-headed players compared with others who played in the PBA in the past. They are a breed apart from those rude, arrogant and ill-tempered imports who played here for the big money and enjoyed the hospitality of the Filipinos. The PBA is lucky to have the likes of Penny displaying his playing skills here.

Now on its 30th year, the PBA has had its up-and-down seasons. Once the country's most popular and profitable sports organization, it fell on hard times in 2003 and 2004. Gone are the good old days when the much respected Leo Prieto, brilliant lawyer Rudy Salud and my *kabayan*, Jun Bernardino, steered the pro league to unprecedented success.

I am not saying that Eala has been ineffective as the PBA commissioner since he replaced Bernardino in 2003, but he needs to prove himself by showing to the public, the team owners and the players as well that he is fair and just; that there is equal treatment and no discrimination in the PBA, especially now that the teams are playing with much intensity because the results carry much weight.

In fact, the competition among the teams never stops—the teams are already busy preparing for the next conference by trading and getting new players. TNT reportedly is letting go of its main players, including Willie Miller, but not Asi Taulava and Jimmy Alapag, while Alaska is sending feelers to acquire Red Bull's Lordy Tugade in exchange for Rich Alvarez, a former Ateneo teammate and bosom buddy of Barako marquee player Rico Villanueva.

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Face to face with Jennifer Aniston

'It has been a tough year but I wouldn't change a thing'

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
Contributor

LOS ANGELES—JENNIFER ANISton is one tough cookie.

The first time we met her a few years ago, Jen was still married to Brad Pitt and very much in love. She came across as a down-to-earth, no-nonsense girl you could hang out and be friends with. She wasn't feeling well at the time (she was nursing a flu) but she exuded warmth, sincerity and a thoroughly wholesome personality.

Today, Jennifer, 36, is in the thick of a media spree that involves her now ex-hubby Brad and a pregnant Angelina Jolie. After several months of keeping their relationship low key, Brad, 42, and Angelina, 30, finally announced they were expecting their first child. The whole world was shocked—including Jennifer.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

Jen was reportedly alone in her Hollywood house when news that the Brangelina baby was due in May broke. For those who are doing their math, Angelina was pregnant before the divorce of Brad and Jen was finalized last October. In a Vanity Fair interview, Jennifer admitted that she wanted to start her own family, going as far as to declare, "There's a man wandering the streets right now who's [going to be] the father of my children."

Could it be her new beau, actor Vince Vaughn, from whom she says she is getting moral support?

Ironically, Jennifer just did a movie, "Derailed," where she portrays "the other woman."

This time around, we met Jennifer at The Ritz Carlton Huntington Hotel and Spa. She arrived in a striking black pinstriped pantsuit, blonde hair cascading down her shoulders. She was calm, cool, relaxed and smiling—this was one month before the announcement of the Brangelina baby.

In "Derailed," the lead characters are cheating on their spouses. How important is fidelity in a marriage? Or should it be accepted as just being "modern" to have an open marriage?

Well (laughter), I am not personally up for swinging but I think, you know, to each his own. There are people who have open marriages and they think that is okay. I personally am not interested in that. I think fidelity is important in a marriage.

Are there other things just as important?

Trust, honesty and friendship.

You have a line in the movie that goes, "You can't appreciate someone until they are gone." Are there people in your life you did not appreciate?

Sure. I would say that as a kid, you do not always appreciate maybe your elders all the time, like your grandmother. I wish I'd spent more time with my grandmother when I was a kid… and it wasn't that I didn't appreciate her, I was just… a kid. But I loved her. She was one of the strongest women I have ever known. Like, we had a fun relationship when we were together but I did not make that extra effort, you know.

What made you accept this role?

I was hesitant at first but I always wanted

FACE/ A2-2

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2. Zathura
3. Narnia
4. Walk the Line
5. Blood Rayne
6. Derailed
7. Proof
8. Don't Give Up on Us
9. Cheaper by the Dozen 2
10. Underworld 2

MALL ACTIVITIES
- V-Day Treats raffle promo February 10-24, 2006 at the Chefs Avenue, Food Junction and Cinema Square
- Love is in the Stars (Fortune Telling) -February 19, 6pm to 9pm
- Love Serenade at Chefs Ave. February 11 & 14, 6pm to 9pm
- Acoustic Nights at Food Junction - February 11 & 14, 6pm to 9pm
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Face to face . . .

From page A2-1

to do a thriller. I love a good thriller.

Did you like your character?

I like [the fact] that she was flawed. I think she was trapped in a situation that she really could not get out of.

Why do you think somebody like Clive's character would be attracted to your character and leave a beautiful wife?

I don't know. I think that's just life. I think that is what is sort of harsh about it. Life is not easy. Life does not make sense sometimes. You can have everything wonderful in the world and you just make stupid choices, you know, because you are bored for a moment or you are not fulfilled for a moment.

Your character obviously has a very dark side—did you see that?

Not really. I mean, I do not look at it as a dark side. Or, I do not think she looks at herself as a dark person, you know. It's like... a villain does not think he is villainous.

Lately, you have been on the cover of most magazines. How has the past year been to you?

It has been the best of times and the worst of times. It has been a tough year but I wouldn't change a thing. I wouldn't trade it for anything.

How do you feel that everyone thinks of you as his or her best friend?

It is nice that everyone thinks that they know me even if they do not. People have been very supportive. I think that is very nice.

Do you always date just actors?

No, it can be anybody as long as he is not crazy. He does not have to be famous. I would go out with a normal guy.

JEN with Clive Owen in "Derailed"

How do you relax?

I do yoga two or three times a week. It keeps my body strong and makes me feel, eat and function better. I try to relax also by being with my friends. I am very easy going. I like to be in my home. I like to watch movies or just get in the car and go on a road trip.

Any regrets from the past year?

I did not have to do anything I did not want to do this past year. It was all good. I did not have to put on an act. My friends made me laugh. I made myself laugh. I have a very small group of friends and I usually speak to three or four for advice. I collect the data and then figure out what to do.

How do you make decisions?

I follow my heart, follow my instincts. Every time I strayed from my instincts, I went down a bad road.

What makes you happy?

A sunset makes me happy, a bottle of wine and nice cheese. And, of course, love makes me happy. Simple things make me happy.

What are your hopes for 2006?

To be happy. To follow my heart, to follow my instincts. To continue to figure things out, find a place, have great friends and have a family of my own.

Do you still believe in marriage?

Sure, why not.

DID YOU KNOW...

6 more for PBB

An unsigned text message gave these names of more "very likely" housemates in the Pinoy Big Brother Celebrity series—which starts Feb. 6 on ABS-CBN (apart from six mentioned in Dollywood yesterday): Tessa Prieto-Valdes, Roxie Barcelo, Aleck Bovick, dWrock DJ Rico Robles, SEA Games Medalist Gretchen Malalad and model Zanjoe Marudo.

Rhumba for Goma

Richard Gomez surprised his wife Lucy and her classmates in Clara Ramona's "Andaluzzi" class (belly dancing plus rhumba) at the Fundacion Centro Flamenco in Makati, by turning up unannounced at their rehearsals for a forthcoming dance concert. The routine practice became a fiery exhibition, thanks to the actor's presence and the excitement it apparently elicited among the ladies. The concert is set Feb. 25 at the RCBC Auditorium.

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1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

3 DERAILED
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

4 SAW 2
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

5 WALK THE LINE
11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00

6 PROOF
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

7 RUMOR HAS IT
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

9 UNDERWORLD 2
12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50

10 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 BLOODRAYNE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

2 UNDERWORLD 2
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 ZATHURA 12:00 2:00 4:00
CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 6:15 8:10 10:00

4 WALK THE LINE
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6 PROOF
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7 SAW 2
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:20 9:50

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1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
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2 DERAILED
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

3 ZATHURA
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

4 UNDERWORLD 2
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

5 BLOODRAYNE
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

7 SAW 2
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

8 PROOF
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

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3 HALF LIGHT
4 UNDERWORLD 2
5 SAW 2
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How to Get the Guy!

Stars: Rachel Alejandro, Geneva Cruz and Vina Morales

Guests: Kris Lawrence and Derek Ramsey (Feb. 10), Luis Alandy (Feb. 11), Jay-R (Feb. 13)

Choreography: Goercel
Musical director: Mark Lopez
Stage director: Floy Quintos
Dates: Feb. 10, 11, 13
Venue: Music Museum

When you're not doing a concert, how do you celebrate Valentine's Day?

Rachel: I have never experienced not having a concert on Valentine's Day. This year will be the first time; it'll be something new.

Geneva: My man [KC Montero] takes me out to dinner.

Vina: If I'm not seeing anyone, I spend it with friends. If I have a special someone, then I spend it with him.

What's the most romantic Valentine's Day you ever experienced?

Rachel: After a concert at the Shangri-La Hotel, I went back to my room and found rose petals all over the floor—my boyfriend's doing. He had also gotten me a cute stuffed toy and ordered champagne.

Geneva: When KC got us a hotel suite and filled it with flowers and candles.

Vina: I haven't really experienced one. Hopefully, soon.

What's your dream Valentine's date?

CLOCKWISE, from top: Vina, Geneva and Rachel

Rachel: A picnic on the beach at sunset, having wine and cheese.

Geneva: Candlelit dinner on the beach with Italian food. A bottle of Pinot or Merlot would be nice.

Vina: On the beach, candlelit dinner, sunset, romantic music.

Who is your fantasy date?

Rachel and Vina: Brad Pitt!

Geneva: Brad Pitt and Chad Michael Murray!

What's the most romantic love song?

Rachel: "It Might Be You."

Geneva: "Back at One" by Brian McKnight.

Vina: "Nobody Does It Better" and "Love Me for What I Am."

If you were not doing a show, who would you watch this year?

Rachel: Brian McKnight or Maxwell.

Geneva: I'd try to see all.

Vina: Secret. Hahaha!

Why should we watch your show? What can the audience expect?

Rachel: It's not your typical Valentine's show. Since there'll be a lot of dancing, it'll be a high-energy show. It'll also be funny and informative for girls and guys alike.

Geneva: We [three] are great friends. We have a certain chemistry that other performers may not have. We have so much fun together—that's what the audience will see.

Vina: Lots of dancing and singing, plus it's our first time to perform together.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

Show Time

Tomorrow

The Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines invites everyone to "Buddy-buddy sa February, Happy-happy sa DSAPI," a celebration of the National Down Syndrome Consciousness Month, at the Pasay City Sports Complex, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

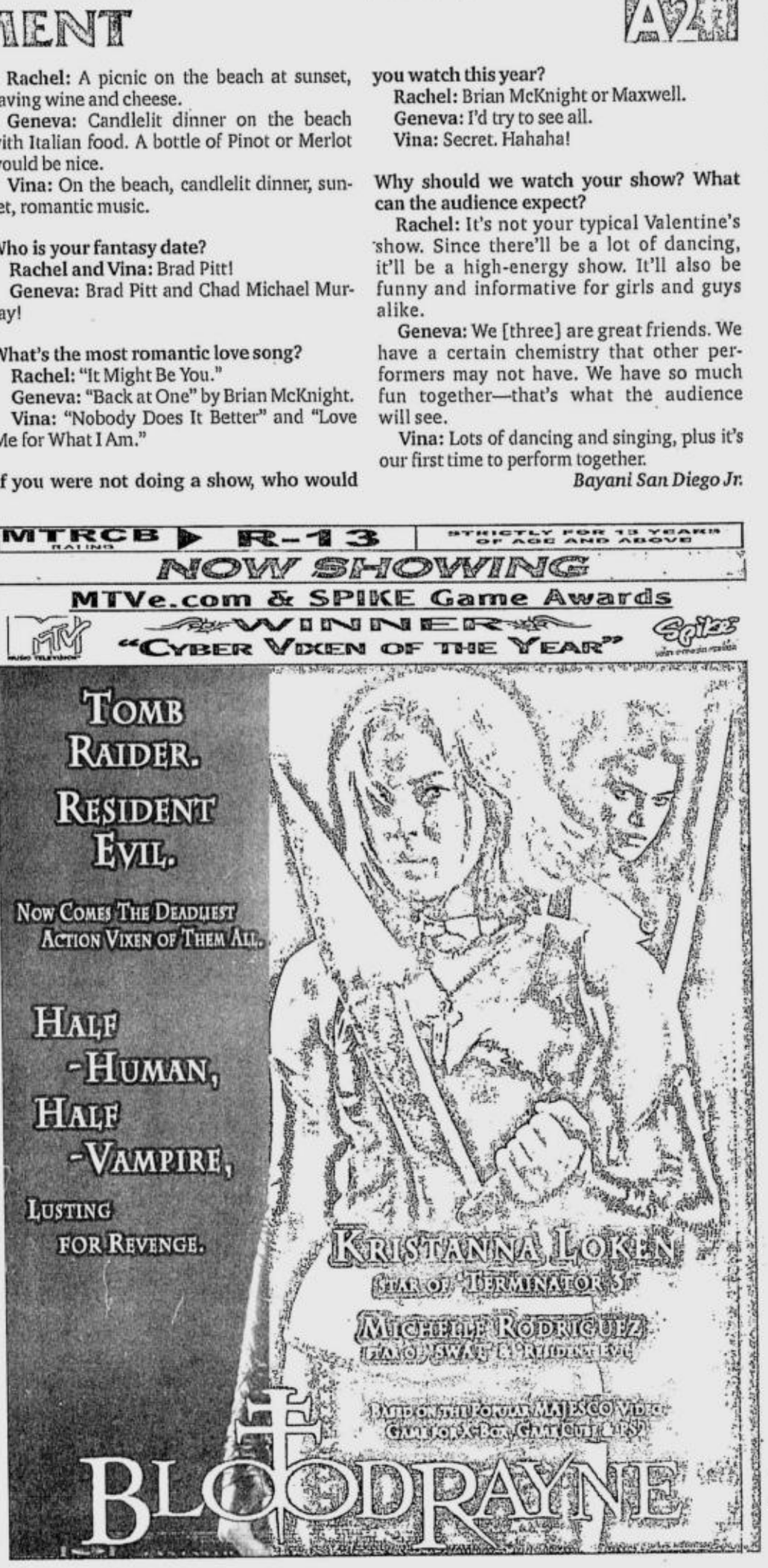
Celebrity guests include Aga Muhlach and Edu Manzano. A mini-concert will feature Passage, Bamboo, Sugarfree and Brownman Revival.

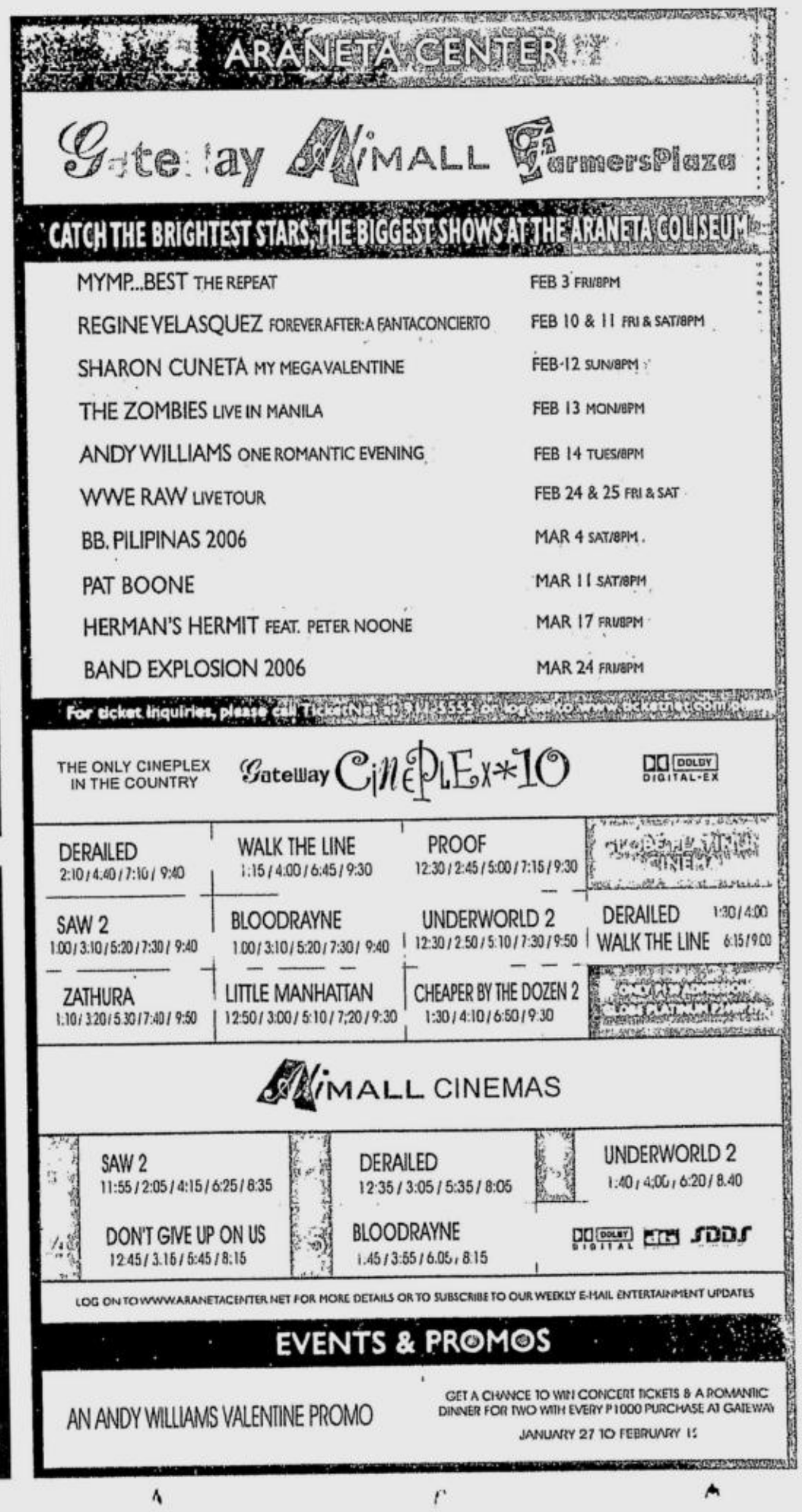
Call 895-3606 or 895-9642.

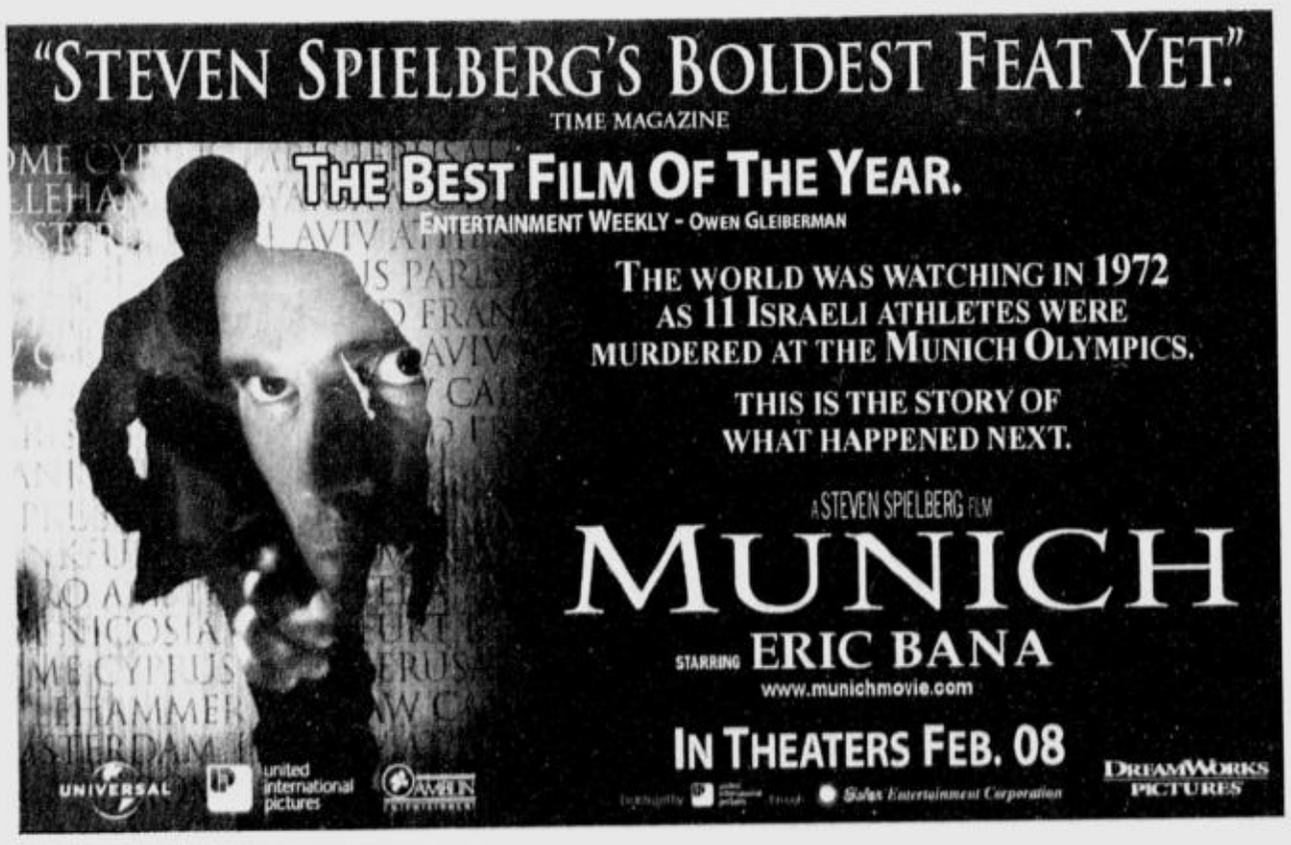
Andy Williams

Andy Williams, one of the most popular vocalists of all time—"Where Do I Begin," "Moon River," "Days of Wine and Roses" among hundreds of other hits—will serenade his Philippine fans during a Valentine concert on Feb. 14 at Araneta Coliseum.

"Andy Williams Live! One Romantic Evening" is a one-night-only event. Call 911-5555.







They rock, we roll

'Walk the Line' is a complicated fairy tale that makes us tap our feet and smile

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

JOAQUIN PHOENIX AND REESE Witherspoon deliver distinguished portrayals of beloved music legends Johnny Cash and June Carter-Cash in "Walk the Line." Phoenix sears as Cash, while Witherspoon sparkles as the painfully loyal Carter. Their rapport brings to life a romance once forbidden, since the pioneering musicians already had their own respective families when they first met.

Phoenix and Witherspoon's milestone roles also required them to sing using their own voices—upon director James Mangold and Cash's insistence.

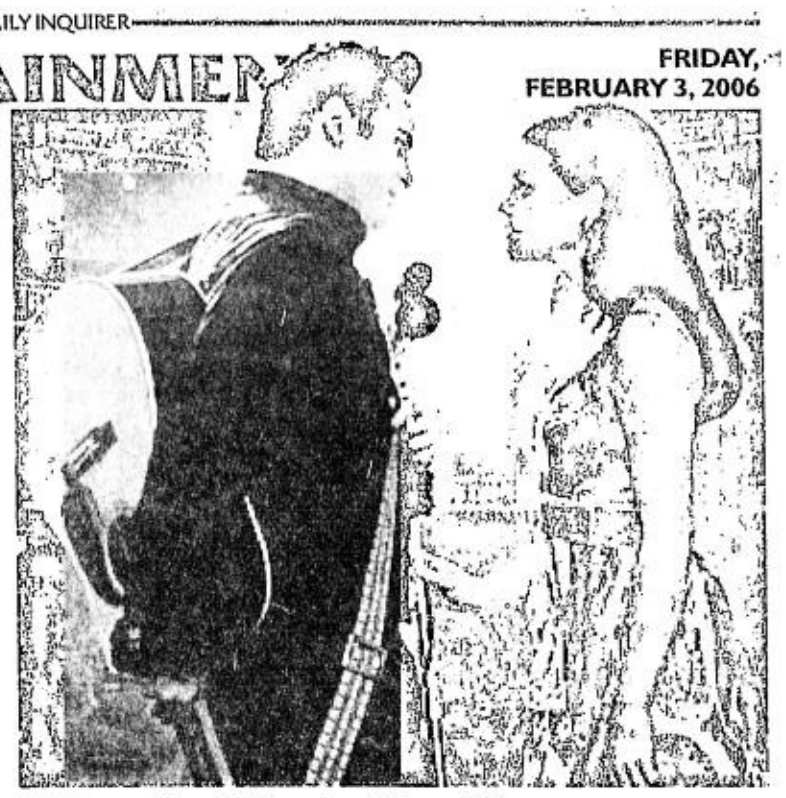
"Walk the Line" skillfully discusses Cash's childhood trauma and eventual self-destructive bouts with drug addiction, and his early, oft-turbulent relationship.

It also depicts the musician's importance in pop cultural revolution—Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis are among his peers—and how different the musical landscape was back in 1950s America.

It's easy to understand how these two future icons set out to conquer their brave new world. But sadly, in Cash's case, that world repeatedly conquered him. In this complicated fairy tale, however, the reserved damsel saves the fallen, booze- and pill-addled knight. One really can't help but be touched.

Based on Cash's two autobiographies, "Walk the Line" underscores the very human side of superstardom, and the ever-reliable dramatic wellspring of humble beginnings. There is a timelessness to it that today's entertainment scene denizens might relate to, and even learn from. We also feel a crucial honesty in the narrative through Cash's pervading lyrics and viscerally appealing music, which spoke, and still speaks, to diverse listeners.

The songs help tell stories within the bigger story, as well. In gripping song numbers, the actors channel the performing personas of those they portray, manifesting sensuality, liberation and heartbreak that make us smile, tap our feet, or choke up. Simply put: They rock, and... well, we roll.



LEAD actors Joaquin Phoenix and Reese Witherspoon

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1 SAW 2 — 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 8:55, 11:00 — R-13
2 WALK THE LINE — 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00 — PG-13
3 DERAILED — 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 — R-13
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3 WALK THE LINE MTRCB. PG-13 1 30, 4.20, 7 10, 10 00
4 SAW 2 MTRCB R-13 1 20, 3.30, 5 40, 7.50, 10.00
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DERAILED R13 1:10,3:30,5.50,8:10,10:30
PROOF PG13 1 00,3:15,5:30,7:45,10:00
ZATHURA GP 12:30,2:45,5:00,7:15,9:30
WALK THE LINE PG13 2:20,5:00,7:40,10:20
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UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION

Hollywood, Bollywood, Jollywood

RP film products find overseas markets

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTORS RICHARD GUTIERrez and Angel Locsin will be speaking in Bahasa Indonesia when the Philippines' hit *fantaserye* "Mulawin" from GMA 7 premieres on an Indonesian channel in March, according to a GMA Network executive.

"Mulawin," the TV series that launched the love team of Richard (Aguiluz) and Angel (Alwina) in 2004, would be dubbed in Bahasa, the dominant language, and aired on TV 7 or Pt. Duta Visual Nusantara Tivi Tujuh, said Darlene Dimaano, assistant vice president for syndication.

"This is a breakthrough. We've wanted to penetrate the Indonesian market for two years now," Dimaano told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone interview on Tuesday. "The program was edited to fit 82 episodes, one hour each. No time slot has been picked."

GMA 7's executive vice president and chief operating officer Jimmy Duavit and TV 7 president Lanny Raahardja inked the deal in June 2005, about the same time GMA 7 and Cambodia's Channel 9 (Cambodia Television Network) linked up for the same TV show, Dimaano noted.

"The program was dubbed in Khmer and aired in Cambodia last September," she said. "We're working on syndicating other programs like 'Encantadia,' but nothing has been finalized so far."

Meanwhile, Tony Matoto, who represented presidential consultant for entertainment Vic del Rosario on a trade mission to India last month said he is hopeful that the trip "sent a strong signal that we are serious in our intention to work with India."

Former President Fidel V. Ramos led a 25-member team that visited the subcontinent from Jan. 15 to 21 to attend "Partnership Summit 2006" in Calcutta.

Del Rosario is also the executive producer of Viva Entertainment Inc. Matoto is Del Rosario's chief of staff and head of Viva Entertainment's film archiving department.

In an earlier interview, Del Rosario pointed out that there is a big Indian market for Pinoy films and TV shows.

"We may be able to generate demand for Filipino films there if we promote them properly. We are targeting the Mumbai market, which is used to watching foreign movies," said Matoto. "We are also looking into the possibility of coproducing Indian films there and/or Filipino movies here."

Mumbai, Matoto added, is the center of Bollywood, the world's largest film industry, which produces twice the annual film input of Hollywood in the United States.

Matoto added: "The companies we spoke with asked us to send screeners (films recorded in VCDs and DVDs). They want to find out if they can market our products there."

At the Calcutta summit, Matoto said Ramos "introduced Pinoy films as Jollywood."

"With our movies introduced as Jollywood, we are hoping to have our own branding, our own identity. When you hear Jollywood, you'd know it's from the Philippines," he explained.

Matoto clarified: "While acknowledging that Jollywood is not of the same level with Bollywood and Hollywood in terms of output, it aspires to be within the top 10 films in the world. Ramos emphasized quality not quantity in films."

CHEER FACTOR

KISHAN S.S.

Director Kishan, 10

MUMBAI — WHILE children his age go gaga over Harry Potter films, a 10-year-old Indian boy calls the shots from behind the camera.

Kishan S.S., who has acted in several regional language films, is making his directorial debut with a feature film on street children, a feat that would make him one of the youngest professional filmmakers in the world.

"I'm ready with 85 percent of the film and looking at an April release," Kishan said from his home in the south Indian city of Bangalore.

Kishan isn't chasing records. "I was out on a drive with my father one day when I saw these street children. I was sad that they were not like us," he says. "They did not go to school or study. I decided to do something for them."

"C/O (care of) Footpath" is the story of a street urchin who gets to go to school and makes it big. It is meant to be an inspiration for millions of street children, says Kishan.

The $170,000, 135-minute film is being produced by Kishan's mother, Shailaja, a movie music director. Reuters

MMTA — METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION MOVIE GUIDE

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3 (DOLBY) WALK THE LINE PG13
4 (DOLBY) SAW2 R13
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(DOLBY) PROOF PG13

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1 (DDS) SAW-2
2 (SDDS) ZATHURA
3 (DTS) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 GOLD (DTS) WALK THE LINE
5 GOLD (DOLBY) BLOODRAYNE
6 GOLD (SDDS) DERAILED
7 GOLD (DOLBY) PROOF
8 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
9 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN-2
10 UNDERWORLD-2

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Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
2 (DTS) ZATHURA
3 (DOLBY) DERAILED
4 THE MAID

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 THE MAID
2 (DOLBY) DERAILED
3 (DTS) ZATHURA
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

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1 THE FOG
2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
3 (DOLBY) LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 DOMINO
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DOLBY) CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN-2
4 (DTS) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 ZATHURA
2 DERAILED
3 FAMILY STONE / SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan)
1 ZATHURA
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE

CINEMA 2000 — Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati — Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 ZATHURA
2 DERAILED
3 UNDERWORLD-2
4 PROOF

Blue Wave Marquinton — Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) DERAILED
2 (DOLBY) ZATHURA
3 (DOLBY) BLOODRAYNE
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA — Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
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2 DERAILED
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 SAW-2
5 BLOODRAYNE

starmall EDSA-SHAW (Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 SAW-2
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) BLOODRAYNE
5 DERAILED

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO
3 ILUSYON
4 RESERVED

metropolis star cinema — www.clickthecity.com.ph (ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 SAW-2
2 DERAILED
3 BLOODRAYNE
4 UNDERWORLD-2

Masagana CINEMA 2000 (Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 UNANG TIKIM
2 DERAILED
3 BLOODRAYNE

Center Mall Cinema — Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4449346)
1 ZATHURA
2 DERAILED

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
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2 KUTOB
3 (DTS EX) RUMOR HAS IT
4 ZATHURA

THEATRES — NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, Telephone No. (044) 600-3025
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 ZATHURA
3 JARHEAD

Cine Nepo (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 DERAILED
2 KUTOB
3 (DOLBY) RESERVED
4 (DTS) RESERVED

Cine Nepo (Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 FAMILY STONE
2 THE FOG
3 (DOLBY) JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 (DTS) DON'T GIVE UP ON US

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1 ZATHURA
2 ST. ANGIE
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Centre Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

Lianas Cinema (Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 HIGH RISK

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) MILLION DOLLAR BABY
2 VENUS
3 BIKTIMA
4 (DTS) HAUNTED SPIRIT

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) DERAILED
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DTS) ZATHURA
4 NIGHT JOB
5 THE MAID

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 FOUR BROTHERS
2 ZATHURA
3 RUMOR HAS IT
4 DERAILED

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
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2 UNANG TIKIM

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Big Time

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MEGAMALL
3 DERAILED 10:30FS/10:45MF 01:00 03:15/05:30 07:45 09:35LFS 10:00LMF 11:50END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 CHRONICLES OF NARNIA 11:20FS/11:30MF 02:00 04:30 07:00/ 09:20LFS/09:30LMF/11:50END
2 UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION 11:20FS/11:30MF 01:30 03:30 05:30 07:30 09:16LFS/09:30LMF/11:15END
3 DERAILED 11:20FS/11:30MF 01:30 03:30 05:30 07:30 09:17LFS/09:30LMF/11:20END

movietime

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 DERAILED
2 WALK THE LINE
3 BLOODRAYNE
4 BIG TIME
5 ZATHURA
6 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
7 SAW 2
8 PROOF
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 UNDERWORLD 2
11 THE MAID
12 NARNIA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 BLUE MOON
2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
3 NARNIA
4 SAW 2
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 DERAILED
7 UNDERWORLD 2
8 ZATHURA
9 BLOODRAYNE
10 THE MAID
11 KING KONG
12 BIG TIME

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 ZATHURA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 SAW 2
5 BLOODRAYNE
6 PROOF
7 WALK THE LINE
8 DERAILED

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 SAW 2
2 WALK THE LINE
3 BLOODRAYNE
4 DERAILED
5 UNDERWORLD 2
6 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
7 ZATHURA
8 BIG TIME
9 PROOF
10 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 PROOF
3 DERAILED
4 BLOODRAYNE
5 ZATHURA
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
7 WALK THE LINE
8 SAW 2
9 BIG TIME
10 RESERVED

SM CITY MANILA
1 BLOODRAYNE
2 DERAILED
3 NARNIA
4 SAW 2
5 ZATHURA
6 UNDERWORLD 2
7 PROOF
8 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 THE MAID
11 BIG TIME
12 WALK THE LINE

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 BLOODRAYNE
2 DERAILED
3 SAW 2
4 UNDERWORLD 2

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 BLOODRAYNE
2 SAW 2
3 DERAILED
4 UNDERWORLD 2

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
1 BLOODRAYNE
2 DERAILED
3 UNDERWORLD 2
4 SAW 2
5 PROOF
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
1 DERAILED
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 SAW 2
4 THE MAID

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 ZATHURA
2 DERAILED
3 NARNIA
4 THE MAID
5 HALF LIGHT
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BACOOR
1 BIG TIME
2 ZATHURA
3 SAW 2
4 HALF LIGHT
5 UNDERWORLD 2
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
7 DERAILED
8 BLOODRAYNE

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 DERAILED
2 ZATHURA
3 RUMOR HAS IT
4 THE MAID

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 DERAILED
2 ZATHURA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 RUMOR HAS IT

SM CITY MARILAO
1 DERAILED
2 THE MAID
3 ZATHURA
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY LUCENA
1 ZATHURA
2 ST. ANGE
3 LITTLE MANHATTAN
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 ZATHURA
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
4 DERAILED

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
2 ZATHURA
3 DERAILED
4 RUMOR HAS IT

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

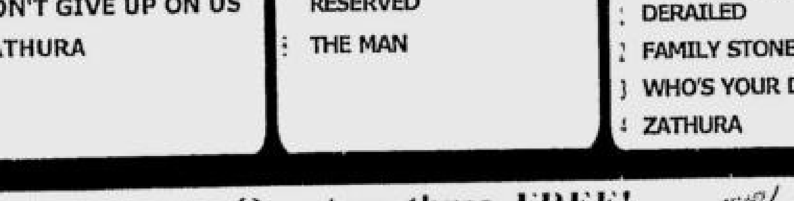
SM CITY CEBU
1 NARNIA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 DERAILED
4 LITTLE MANHATTAN
5 HALF LIGHT
6 THE MAID
7 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
8 ZATHURA

SM CITY ILOILO
1 ST. ANGE
2 RESERVED
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 ZATHURA
5 RUMOR HAS IT
6 DERAILED
7 RESERVED
8 THE MAN

SM CITY DAVAO
1 DERAILED
2 ST. ANGE
3 ZATHURA
4 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
5 LITTLE MANHATTAN
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 DERAILED
2 FAMILY STONE
3 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
4 ZATHURA

One, two, three, FREE!



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'Show me the monkey!'

Backstage at the Screen Actors Guild Awards—or close encounters with Matt Dillon, Sandra Bullock, Paul Giamatti, Felicity Huffman ...

Photos by Janet Susan R. Nepales

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—"SHOW ME the monkey! Show me the monkey!"

When we heard the photographers screaming thus to the winners backstage at last Sunday evening's Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards, we wondered if they were asking a particular actor or actress to expose a body part.

It turned out that the photogs simply wanted **Reese Witherspoon** or **Kiefer Sutherland** to prominently show off their green-black SAG trophies.

As normally happens in these events (SAG night was the latest event in Hollywood's ongoing awards season), the photographers and reporters were split into two groups. After thanking their divorce lawyers (**S. Epatha Merkerson** did) and agents (most actors did), winners were whisked first to the paparazzi room and then to the reporters' room.

GEORGE Clooney

We knew when a big star was being photographed next room because the paparazzi, never known for being shy, shouted at the top of their lungs to catch the winner's attention, make him or her stop and pose. The sound of this pandemonium reminded us of a boxing match.

In the press room, a different kind of madness ensued. Whenever reporters from all branches of media—print, radio, TV, online—are thrown together, expect the questions to range from the sublime to the downright silly.

"I can't believe you just asked that!" exclaimed Sandra Bullock to one reporter. We had been admiring Sandra for staying in the sidelines (she was not even on the stage for winners to stand on while being asked questions), letting her "Crash" costars bask in the limelight for their Best Ensemble (Film) win, when a writer asked her to step out, front and center, and answer this query: "What are you going for? Who are you wearing?"

Amid laughter, Sandra smilingly retorted, "What was I going for? What were you going for? What were you thinking when you put that on? I don't know how to answer that."

For the record, Sandra looked lovely in a pastel-hued off-shoulder dress. Earlier in the red carpet parade, we thought **Brenda Strong** of "Desperate Housewives," tall and regal, stood out. **George Clooney** clowned around and was his usual friendly self, talking to almost everyone. Walking behind pregnant actress **Mariska Hargitay**, George amusingly said out loud to the photographers, "I didn't do that!" and made matching gestures. Everybody cracked up. When Mariska turned around and saw what he was doing, he immediately engaged her in a conversation.

Even 77-year-old **Shirley Temple Black**, the night's Lifetime Achievement awardee, announced, "The handsomest guy in the room is (George) Clooney. I haven't talked to him yet. I will later."

George may have lost to **Paul Giamatti** as Best Supporting Actor but the latter said of the "Syriana" actor: "He's good-looking and a good actor." Paul himself is one of the finest actors today but appearance-wise, he was characteristically dressed rather casually—no tie, several buttons open, a few pimples on his face.

Typically, the self-effacing actor did not take too seriously a reporter's question on how he planned his career path. "Was I on a path?" he deadpanned. "I thought I was just lost in the woods."

About bling

Back to the red carpet, an interesting sight was a gaggle of limo drivers, who, having dropped off their famous passengers, were trying to spot the celebrities through the media throng and a fence. "Is that **Kofi Annan**?" they asked aloud, mistaking a gray-haired black man doing the red carpet media line for the UN Secretary General. The question showed that these chauffeurs spend a lot of time on the road listening to "real" news on the limo radio, and not merely vegetating in front of the TV watching the E! channel.

While all this was going on, a colleague of mine who was going live on Australian TV half-seriously fretted about the $40,000 diamond earrings she was wearing, lent to her by Chopard. "I feel as if I need a bodyguard," she quipped as she tugged at her jewelry to make sure they were still there.

S. EPATHA Merkerson

Speaking of bling, Merkerson, Best Actress in a TV Movie or Miniseries (for HBO's "Lackawanna Blues"), was also the winner in the Most Blinding Bling Department. The actress was dressed down in a black blouse and pants but her ring, bracelet, necklace and earrings sure sparkled. The dazzle from her diamond-studded ring alone almost made us reach for our sunglasses.

SANDRA Bullock: What was the question?

It was déjà vu for us when Dominic Monaghan walked into the press room with his "Lost" cast mates. The other year, Dominic appeared on the same spot as part of the winning "Lord of the Rings" ensemble. So we asked Dominic what it was like being a winner this time around. "It's just work," he answered. "You go from one project to another. It's great to just be working. Nothing is more significant than another. They are stepping stones."

Dominic's co-star, **Michelle Rodriguez**, made the press laugh when she answered a fashion question with, "I'm wearing Diane Von Furstenberg. Did I say that right? She's been in the business since the '60s, and I love old people."

Other memorable backstage moments:

Sean Hayes showed why he deserved to win Best Actor in a TV Comedy Series ("Will & Grace"). As he was being introduced to the press, Sean pretended to be a hopeful nominee all over again. He crossed his fingers in mock suspense and when he heard his name, he reacted jubilantly and rushed to the mike.

Instant rapport

Also an exuberant winner was **Mehcad Brooks**, a member of the "Desperate Housewives" cast which was adjudged Best Ensemble (TV Comedy Series). Mehcad revealed that, only five years ago, he was enrolled at the nearby University of Southern California and sat as one of the fans in the bleachers stand. With that admission, he jumped down to be with his press audience and yelled into a mike held by a reporter.

Mehcad's co-star, **Felicity Huffman**, Best Actress in a TV Comedy Series, also had a way of creating instant rapport with the cooped up journalists. Entering the room, her first words were, "You need a drink, right? Why can't we arrange that?"

When we interviewed her less than a year ago, Felicity told a fashion reporter in our group that the earrings she wore that day was something she just bought at Sears. But this evening, Felicity was quite a vision in her violet gown and 18-karat gold chandelier earrings. "I'm (now) a *fashionista*!" she quipped, her tone dripping with irony.

PAUL Giamatti

Felicity insisted that her recent successes had not changed her. "It happened to me so late," said the most down-to-earth among the *desperadas*. "I'm such an old broad. You get a deep sense of gratitude in your bones."

As the rites ended, **Matt Dillon** suddenly thrust his statuette (which he received as a member of the "Crash" ensemble) into our hands. The thing sure felt heavy—12 pounds of solid bronze. No wonder the pregnant **Rachel Weisz** had to put her Best Supporting Actress trophy down before she answered the reporters' questions.

"Oscars ... Oscars," we whispered to Matt, predicting that he would also be nominated by the Academy for Best Supporting Actor, following his nominations in the same category tonight and at the Globes (also for "Crash"). He simply smiled.

Matt remembered that we missed seeing his new movie in Sundance so he asked us, "Have you seen 'Factotum'?" The man was already campaigning for awards season 2007!

Two days later, Matt did score an Oscar nomination.

(E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.)

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BUSINESS

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Gokongwei, the 2nd time around /B2

Customs exceeds January collection goal /B6

P10-B SLEX upgrade finally set to roll out

Project underway as TRB issues vital document

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE P10-BILLION SOUTH LUZON EXPRESSWAY UPGRADE is finally set to roll out now that the Tollways Regulatory Board has issued the final document that will allow proponent South Luzon Tollways Corp. (SLTC) to push through with the project, according to Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila.

Favila said in an interview that the supplemental tollway operation agreement (Stoa) was signed last Wednesday, which would allow the SLTC to follow up its initial preparations undertaken in 2004.

SLTC is an 80 percent-20 percent joint venture between the Malaysian-controlled Hopewell Crown Infrastructure Inc. and the Philippine National Construction Corp.

The National Development Co., the government's investment arm, will fund a part of the project to secure the right of way.

Favila said that, like the implementation of the reformed value-added tax, the improvement of a vital road that links Metro Manila's seaports with the industrial enclaves south of the capital is key to realizing the government's growth targets.

NDC general manager Arthur N. Aguilar

P-10B SLEX/ B3

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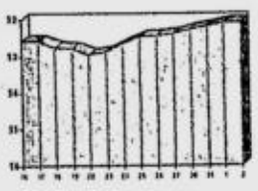

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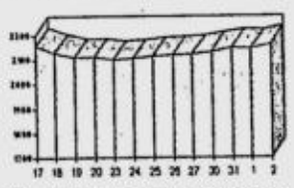
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 2, 2006

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close 0.74% higher

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY closed 0.74 percent higher on gains in select market heavyweights and a higher sales tax that boosted in

SHARES/ B2

MYTH #1

AREN'T ALL CARS AS SAFE AS A VOLVO THESE DAYS?

Sadly, no. Although — strange as it might sound — we've tried to make sure they are. For example, when Volvo invented the three point seat belt in 1959 we decided not to patent it so all manufacturers could use it — and save even more lives. (we did the same thing when we invented the catalytic converter in 1976, incidentally. No patent.)

Because when it comes to safety, we're utterly committed to going the extra mile. That's why we build all our cars to safety standards that go far beyond the EURO NCAP star system. No wonder that Folksam, a Swedish crash testing agency, has used data from real-life accidents to calculate that Volvo models are at least 30% safer than the average car. And in the annual Consumers Association safety tests, our whole range consistently beats many cars with a five-star EURO NCAP rating.

The same commitment drove our investment in our multi-million pound Safety Centre in Gothenburg, which has investigated over 30,000 real life accidents involving Volvo cars and used their findings to make our cars even safer.

And because we believe computer simulations tell only half the story, we also conduct over 200 full-scale collisions each year, based on what researchers discover on the roads.

We then use this information to create unique safety enhancements, from increasing the size of our crumple zones to help protect pedestrians to WHIPS, our Whiplash Protection System, proven to reduce the risk of long-term whiplash injury.

MYTH #2

A VOLVO'S NATURAL HABITAT IS THE SLOW LANE

Or at the very most, the middle lane. But put your foot down in a Volvo these days and you'll find that myth disappears as fast as the cars in your rear-view mirror.

After all, Volvo was winning British Touring Car Championships when the competition was still sitting on their dads' shoulders in the stands. And we've carried that love of flat-out thrills into our production cars.

Take the Volvo S60 T5, for example. Available for test drives at Volvo dealerships—but in 2002, the very same car broke 18 land-speed records in 24 hours at Milbrook (including racking up an average speed of 135.1mph). Which makes it the only production car to hold such a record. It packs a mighty 260bhp under the bonnet and 350Nm of torque, yet balanced by an array of performance-enhancing technology designed to keep your car on the road and smile on your face. Slow? Sluggish? Sorry, we've got to put our foot down on that one...

MYTH #3

OK, BUT AREN'T VOLVO FANS IN THE MINORITY?

Ah, you'd be surprised. In the past few years, it's been Volvo that's been getting the motoring press hot under the collar, not the marques you'd expect. In the words of an international motoring correspondent, 'these day Volvos are cool cars to be seen in'.

Even certain, more notoriously hard to please motoring journalists have been bowled over – 'it must be the sheer brutality of the thing that made it head and shoulders above our favorites. Influenced by the strong kick in the solar plexus, we truly felt that if power and excitement is what you want, this is what you need.'

So if you've ever felt inexplicable feelings of attraction towards a Volvo, take heart. You're not alone. Now why not see where those longings take you?

MYTH #4

VOLVO CARS ARE SLEEK AND STYLISH.

OK. NOW THIS MYTH IS TRUE AND WE TOTALLY AGREE.

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But don't take our word for it. The best way to really see how far we've come is to get behind the wheel yourself. So if you like what you read so far – the best is yet to come.

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BTr nets ₱35B from investments

Income up 52 percent from ₱22.94 billion recorded in 2004

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF THE TREASURY SAID IT earned P35 billion from investing part of the national government's bond sinking fund in foreign securities.

The national government contributes to the fund to ensure payment of maturing obligations, such as long-term sovereign bonds.

The fund is mainly invested in dollar-denominated paper issued by foreign governments.

Government data showed that the P34.812-billion income that the Treasury earned from BSF investments in 2005 was 52 percent more than the P22.94 billion it collected the previous year.

"Investments of the bond sinking fund was one of the main sources of BTr income last year," National Treasurer Omar Cruz earlier said.

The Treasury collected P70.662 billion in revenues last year inclusive of the income from BSF investments.

The Treasury's total revenues for 2005 was almost double the official target of only P36.6 billion, and 9 percent higher than the P64.69 billion collected the previous year.

Other revenue sources of the Treasury, which serves as a depository of the national government's income and a manager of its liabilities, were interest on deposits to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and other banks, dividends on the government's shares of stock in state-owned companies, and fees and charges collected by government agencies and remitted to the Treasury.

The Treasury's performance made up for the collection shortfalls of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, the government's two main revenue earners.

The BIR collected only P534.5 billion, or P12.4 billion short of its P546.9-billion target. The BOC, on the other hand, fell short of its 151.2-billion target by P9.5 billion.

But the government has been warned that depending on the Treasury, instead of the government's main revenues earners, to meet fiscal targets was risky.

This year, the BIR is tasked with collecting P675.4 billion. The BOC is required to collect P190.5 billion, while the Treasury is expected to contribute P51.9 billion.

Gokongwei, the 2nd time around

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

WE HAVE ANOTHER ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE that taipan John Gokongwei Jr. has indeed taken more than an academic interest in the merger-and-acquisition potential of Equitable PCIBank.

The former PCIBank owner the other day called up another former bank director—this we have on good authority—to ask about the possibility of the Bangko Sentral allowing Equitable PCIBank to auction the 10-percent "treasury" block instead of retiring it.

More importantly, Mr. John also asked his former board member the probable market valuation should the 10-percent block be auctioned along with the GSIS stake in Equitable PCIBank.

As it turned out, the first Gokongwei query has already been answered, with no less than Deputy Governor for Supervision and Examination Nestor Espenilla Jr., another free-market believer like the new governor, giving the go-ahead pronouncement.

Earlier, Mr. John had intimated to close associates the possibility of joining an auction should the GSIS, SSS and Romualdez shareholdings, already equivalent to about 46 percent, are offered as one block.

With 10 percent thrown in, translating to undisputed control, the smart money is on Mr. John—the lone taipan without a universal bank—finally crossing an unwritten rule among taipans never to encroach on each other's territory, given that Equitable PCI Bank is now the de facto domain of fellow taipan, Henry Sy Sr., with the family's rumored 34-percent stake.

Incidentally, the Equitable PCIBank board will meet again today, with the discussions expected to be lengthy, deep and, given the kind of personal and professional fortunes at stake, passionate.

MVP on Tonyboy's style

PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan gave the first public confirmation that his predecessor and former controlling shareholder Antonio Cojuangco had different, even conflicting, management philosophies.

In his acceptance speech Tuesday night after being named Management Man of the Year, MVP recalled the early days when his First Pacific Group took control of the country's biggest telecom company from Cojuangco.

"When I first reviewed the PLDT budget in December 1998 for the incoming year 1999, I was surprised that the first item for discussion was not sales or revenues, but capital expenditures for equipment!" MVP said, supplying the exclamation point. "You can probably infer the reason why."

Money-go-round

• FORMER SEC general accountant Roberto Manabat has been recommended by no less than SEC Chair Fe Barin to fill up the lone vacancy in the five-member commission.

• Competition among telecom companies is really getting tougher. Globe marketing men have been cold-calling the cell phones of select Smart subscribers, offering free Globe SIM cards.

Heard through the grapevine

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is considering relocating to a squatter-infested government area in Quezon City near the Bureau of Internal Revenue, instead of The Fort, the future site of the unified Philippine Stock Exchange and closer to the SEC's corporate base in Ayala.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Feb. 2, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	36	37	36	37	2,556,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58.5	59	58.5	59	154,000
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	63	63	62.5	62.5	86,100
International Exch. Bank	20.75	21.25	20.75	21	290,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31	30.5	31	472,300
Philippine National Bank	32	32	32	32	7,000
Phil. Savings Bank	35	35	35	35	10,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14	14	14	14	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	38.5	39	38.5	39	595,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	35	35	35	35	92,900
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Manulife Financial Corp.	3120	3140	3120	3140	2,130
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	253,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	145	145	145	145	1,500
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2150	2150	2150	2150	310
Ivantage Corp.	0.66	0.67	0.65	0.67	3,320,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	48	48.5	48	48.5	316,200
Manila Electric Co. A	14	14	14	14	27,300
Manila Electric Co. B	21.5	21.75	21.5	21.5	632,900
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.2	6.3	8,216,000
Petron Corp.	4.65	4.75	4.65	4.75	1,292,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.97	0.97	0.96	0.96	200,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	102,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	40,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	37.5	38	37	38	565,200
Pancake House Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	100,000
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	120,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.64	1.64	48,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63	63	62.5	63	131,700
San Miguel Corp. B	86	86	85	85.5	408,300
Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.5	18.5	10,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.35	870,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.18	1.22	1.16	1.2	2,236,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.3	4.4	4.25	4.4	2,348,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	100,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	70,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Active Alliance Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	120,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	1,400,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	300,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	5,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	660,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.01	0.0085	0.01	430,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	41,500,000
Ayala Corp.	337.5	337.5	335	337.5	100,960
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	100,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	155,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	3,124,000
APC Group Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	50,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	15,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.87	0.87	2,100,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.94	2	1.94	1.98	683,000
ATN Holdings Inc. B	1.94	2.7	1.94	2.7	211,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.7	8.8	8.7	8.7	95,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	3,015,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.1	1,035,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.24	1.3	1.24	1.24	4,151,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.24	1.28	1.22	1.22	300,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	4.55	4.55	4.45	4.45	447,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,200,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	2,340,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.135	0.14	0.135	0.14	9,930,000
SM Investments Corp.	236	236	228	233	176,800
South China Resources Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.8	0.81	290,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	2,200,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.145	0.12	0.14	27,090,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	11	11.5	11	11.25	15,267,100
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	180,000
Belle Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	2,939,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	150,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.21	0.215	0.205	0.21	3,950,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.66	1.56	1.58	2,391,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.82	1.84	1.82	1.82	110,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	330,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.49	2,360,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.025	20,600,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.54	1.56	1.5	1.5	11,423,000
Interport Res.	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	3,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	1,090,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	600,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.48	1.48	5,697,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.34	1,940,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	200,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	50,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	240,000
SM Development Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	15,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.9	8	7.9	8	7,433,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	1,200,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	169,900
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.9	3,940,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	760	770	760	765	8,990
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.45	3.35	3.45	1,159,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1875	1895	1875	1890	99,280
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.175	0.18	2,300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	10,400,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.18	17,000
Philweb Corp.	0.034	0.034	0.032	0.033	1,241,700,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2	2	2	2	1,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	10,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	12.25	12.25	12	12	945,500
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.26	1.26	67,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	7.5	8	5	5	13,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.66	1.68	1.66	1.68	890,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.34	0.43	0.34	0.42	34,830,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	2,000
Ipeople Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.25	75,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Jardine Davies Inc.	23	23	23	23	2,000
Paxys Inc.	7.9	8	7.8	7.8	1,063,000
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.12	1.18	1.12	1.14	1,511,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.5	1.56	1.5	1.54	1,458,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	68,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.2	6.2	5.9	5.9	461,000
Benguet Corp. A	7	7	7	7	22,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	10,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.23	0.23	0.225	0.225	750,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.26	2,690,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	58,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.024	0.025	0.024	0.024	79,200,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	51,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.5	1.76	1.5	1.74	43,799,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.22	2.26	2.14	2.18	74,551,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26	26	25.5	26	613,800
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	920,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	900,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	134,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.009	38,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	730,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.48	240,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	4.35	4.35	4.25	4.25	60,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(PDR)	12.25	12.25	12	12	6,422,000

CURRENCIES

February 2, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.829531	1.000000	52.0810
Japan	Yen	0.007022	0.008465	0.4409
United Kingdom	Pound	1.471257	1.773600	92.3709
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106945	0.128922	6.7144
Switzerland	Franc	0.642849	0.774954	40.3604
Canada	Dollar	0.726957	0.876347	45.6410
Singapore	Dollar	0.509009	0.613610	31.9574
Australia	Dollar	0.625778	0.754375	39.2886
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.200465	2.652661	138.1532
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.221209	0.266667	13.8883
Brunei	Dollar	0.507452	0.611733	31.8597
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000089	0.000107	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.021151	0.025497	1.3279
UAE	Dirham	0.225852	0.272264	14.1798
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.205500	62.7836
Argentina	Peso	0.271088	0.326797	17.0199
Brazil	Real	0.374506	0.451467	23.5129
India	Rupee	0.018797	0.022660	1.1802
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.221238	0.266702	13.8901
Mexico	New Peso	0.079350	0.095657	4.9819
South Africa	Rand	0.135744	0.163639	8.5225
Korea	Won	0.000863	0.001040	0.0542
Syria	Pound	0.015980	0.019264	1.0033
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025976	0.031314	1.6309

Shares close . . . From page B1

vestor sentiment, dealers said.

The composite index rose 15.85 points to 2,159.37 after touching a low of 2,143.52. Volume stood at 2.52 billion shares worth P1.34 billion ($25.7 million).

Gainers outnumbered losers 49 to 35, while 48 stocks ended unchanged. The all-shares index rose 11.84 points to 1,042.95.

The peso averaged at 52.07 to the US greenback in midday trade.

Top-traded Philippine Long Distance Telephone ended up P25 at a record-high of P1,890 after its chairman Manuel Pangilinan said the firm's 2005 net profit likely exceeded its P30-billion target. *AFP*

Peso settles at 52.09 to US dollar

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY CAME close to breaching the 52:$1 level, but didn't quite make it.

The peso yesterday hit a high of 52.03 and a low of 52.19 before firming up at a three-year high of 52.09 to the US dollar, same as Wednesday's finish.

"There was good two-way liquidity," said Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. "Dollar demand from manufacturing, oil and others was covered by inflows from overseas Filipino workers remittances and portfolio investments."

Overall investor sentiment on the Philippines remained positive, the BSP chief added.

"There's still an upside for the peso. The market will continue to test the 52:$1 level and 51.88 after that," said Jonathan Ravelas, chief strategist at Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

Ravelas said certain equity deals in the pipeline—such as the public offering of First Generation Holdings Corp. and the fresh investment committed by Japan's NTT DoCoMo in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.—would further perk up the local currency.

P10-B SLEX . . .

From page B1

said the signing of the STOA would expedite groundwork on the SLEX.

The SLEX project involves the repair of the Alabang viaduct, widening of the stretch from Alabang to Calamba in Laguna, and extending the road to Sto. Tomas in Batangas.

About 60 percent of the traffic of goods in Luzon pass through this vital artery.

Aguilar said the NDC and its private partner, led by Malaysia's MTD Capital Bhd, had already started construction and legal preparations, even when the Stoa was still pending with the TRB.

PRULINK	PRU LIFE U.K.	
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Jan. 31, 2006	Last Week Jan. 24, 2006
Bond Fund - Peso	1.36362	1.36326
Managed Fund - Peso	1.49128	1.48489
Growth Fund - Peso	1.16111	1.14672
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.2240	1.2224

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

Investment Funds of Wealth Builder and Wealth SECURE	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
Wealth Builder / Wealth Secure	Jan. 30, 2006	Jan. 23, 2006
Fixed Income Fund	1.112192	1.111185
Balanced Fund	1.103875	1.101716
Equity Fund	1.086236	1.081359

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.
The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

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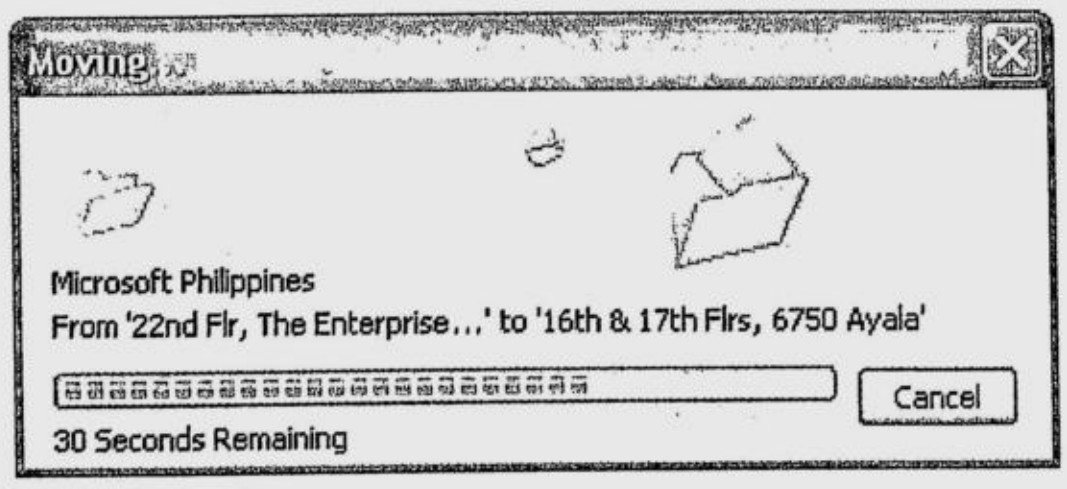

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South Forbes
5 Resort Components

This luxurious two-level infinity pool is an exclusive resort amenity for Golf View Terraces residents.

Why are more and more wise investors and homeowners choosing South Forbes? The answers lie in these five interesting components of this world-class golf resort city.

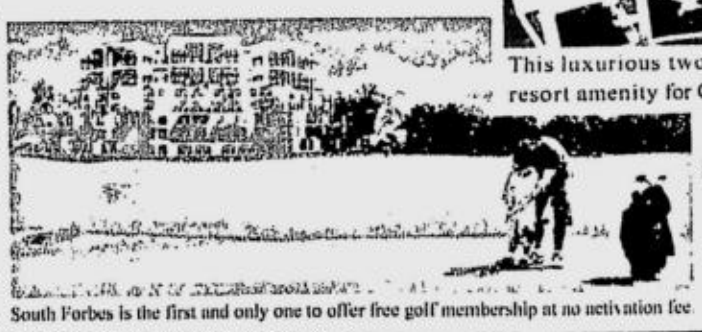
1 **Free golf membership.** All lot and condominium unit owners are automatic members of the 18-hole, world-class South Forbes Golf and Leisure Club. Good news: Construction of the South Forbes golf course is NOW IN FULL SWING!

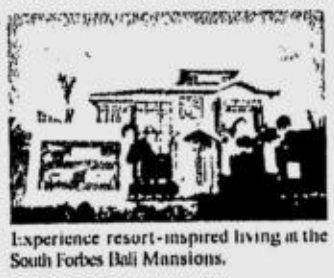
2 **Access to other world-class golf courses.** South Forbes member-residents can play and get huge discounts in 42 world-class golf courses worldwide through the exclusive golf club of IMG SportsClub.

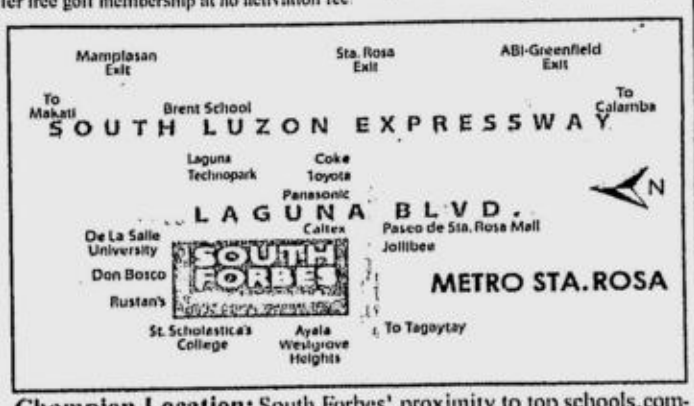
3 **Exclusive clubhouses and amenities.** South Forbes is the first to offer themed enclaves: the Mediterranean Villas, Bali Mansions, and Tokyo Mansions. Best of all, each South Forbes community has its own clubhouse a few steps away from your home.

4 **Business & resort hotel.** Astoria Plaza Sta. Rosa will serve the business and conference needs of multinational companies. Relax and unwind at its spa and wellness center.

5 **Resort Homes.** South Forbes Bali Mansions epitomizes the best in resort-inspired living, at a monthly amortization of as low as P20,000. Or, get a unit at Golf View Terraces and have the fairways of the South Forbes Golf and Leisure Club as your perfectly manicured backyard.


South Forbes is the first and only one to offer free golf membership at no activation fee.


Experience resort-inspired living at the South Forbes Bali Mansions.



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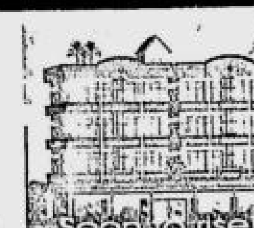

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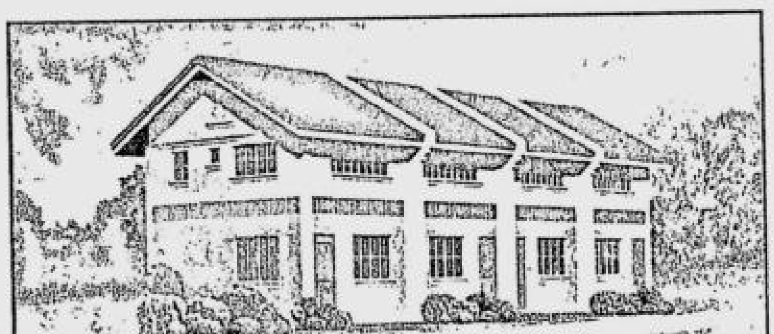

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* Saranggani St. Lot 1208m² GFA 670m² 4BDR/4T&B, Living, Dining, Lanai, Den/ Bar, 2 Kitchens, Maid's/ Driver's Rm/T&B, Garden, Spool, 2 Car Garage Rear Country Club Golf Course Negotiable

* Maria Cristina Cor. Lot 1137m² GFA 570m² 3BDR/ 3T&B, Living, Dining, Family Rm/T&B, Lanai, Maid's/ Driver's Rms, Big Garden, Spool, 2 Car Garage Negotiable

Alabang Hills

* Don Manolo Blvd Vacant Lot 800m² Near San Beda-Alabang / New Life Center P7.2M

* House & Lot 2400m² GFA 750m² 4BDR/4T&B, Living Rm/T&B, Dining, Lanai, Den, Kitchen Bar, Servant's Qtr/T&B, Covered Pelota Court, Tennis Court, Spool, 5 Car Garage Negotiable

* Tagbilaran St. Lot 456m² w/ 2-stry concrete res. GFA 420m² 3BDR/3T&B, Living, Dining, Den, 1 Car Garage Negotiable

Filinvest Corporate

* Parque de España Res. Condo 97m² 2BDR/2T&B Negotiable

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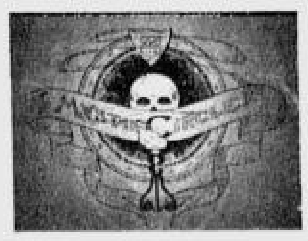

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JUSTICE FOR JUDGE HENRICK GINGOYON!!

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Jesus Delprado and Pura Cabrera has been extrajudicially settled by their heirs before Notary Public Leticia S. Mariano de Guia of Parañaque City. As per Doc. No. 82 Page 18 Book No. 111 Series of 2006. (PDI Feb. 3,10, & 17, 2006)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that MARAPRI LAND DEV'T CORP. Stock Certificate Nos. 001 & 004 representing 6,666 shares issued in the name of MARIA LINA S. VELAYO were lost as per Affidavit of Loss dated 01-16-2006 of Notary Public Atty. Lope M. Velasco of Makati City as per Doc. No.26, Page No.07, Book No.62, Series of 2006. If no contest received new certificate will be issued.
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2 Corinthians 4:14

JOSE V. FAUSTINO

of Panganiban, Catanduanes

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 30, 2006 at the age of 76.

His wife **Imelda**, children, **Ferdie & Tess, Rico & Beng, Joey & Mabeth**, grandchildren, **Bong, Jetty & Dea; JR, Mike & Paulo; Angelica**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels – Guadalupe, Chapel I, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 4, 2006 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Atty. Agustin Teves Locsin

Peacefully joined † **Lydia Montenegro**, departed wife and mother of his children, to be with our Creator on Tuesday, January 31, 2006.

His wife, **Ricka Lopez**,
Children:
Pinky Freymann and her children
John, Anna, Mark, Bro. Joseph, L.C.
Bambi Stables with her husband, **Peter**, and daughter
Lia
Diego and his children
Roberto, Farah and **Beatriz**
† **Ana Mari**
Gela Dolorico with her husband, **Bimbo, M.D.** and son
Stevie
Mike with his wife **Nona**
Mario and his son
Angelo
Diding

Request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be in Dumaguete City today, February 3, 2006.

Our Dearly Beloved
"Papa"

CEFERINO B. BELLEN

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 31, 2006 at the age of 82.

His beloved wife **Milagros**; children **Evelyn & Dannie Escueta, Bert & Mila Bellen, June, Ruben, Beth, Christy & Eddie Ambe**; sister, brothers- and sisters-in-law; grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 5, 2006, 10 AM at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

DRA. MAXIMA F. BALMASEDA

Passed away in the Grace of the Lord and joined her husband RAMON on February 1, 2006 at the age of 93.

Her bereaved children **GLORIA** (†) & **PRIMO** (†) **MALIWANANG, ZENY & RIZAL A. NOLIDO, JESSIE & NAZ RACOMA, PHILIP** and **OFIE BALMASEDA**; grandchildren **JACKIE, DENISE, MITZI, APPLE** and **PINKY, RAMBY, ABET, REGGIE, ERWIN** and **PRIM; JOYCE, IAN** and **JAY; PJ, PRITZ, PINGGOY** and **PAPO**; great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12-G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, 5th of February 2006, at Eternal Gardens, Baesa, Caloocan City, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Arlington.

There's a daily Mass at 8:00 p.m.

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In Loving Memory of

Col. Alexis S. Aldeguer (Ret.)

on his Second Death Anniversary
February 3, 2006

We, his beloved wife **Amy**; children **Yvette, Jo-Anne** and **Glenn Harris, Christine, Alexandra, Nicole** and **Carlo**; grandchildren **Marc Ethan Harris** and **Antonio Alexis** invite you to join us in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

The Missionary Benedictine Sisters
St. Scholastica's Priory, Manila
announce the death of

Sister Simeona Ricalde OSB

at the Medical Center Manila on February 1, 2006, at the age of 91.

The Sisters, her nephews **Atty. Pelagio Ricalde, Mr. Lesmes Ricalde, Dr. Peter Ricalde Figueroa, Atty. Tomas Ricalde, Jr.,** her niece **Dr. Teresita Ricalde Belamide**, and their families, and relatives request the pious readers to pray for her.

Her remains lie in state at St. Scholastica's Chapel, Manila.

Interment today at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

In Loving Memory
on the 1st Death Anniversary of

MANUEL BUENCAMINO DE LEON

on February 4, 2006
and
on the 40th Death Anniversary of

NARCISA BUENCAMINO DE LEON

on February 6, 2006

Holy Masses will be offered on both dates at the following churches:

MINOR BASILICA OF THE BLACK NAZARENE Parish of St. John The Baptist, Quiapo, Manila	5:00 A.M.
MARY THE QUEEN PARISH, Greenhills, San Juan, M.M.	6:00 A.M.
NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY La Naval de Manila, Sto. Domingo Church, Q.C.	6:00 A.M.
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH, San Juan, M.M.	6:00 A.M.
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO, Forbes Park, Makati	6:15 A.M.
BASILICA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION Manila Metropolitan Cathedral, Intramuros, Manila	6:30 A.M.
DIVINE WORD MISSION SEMINARY Christ the King, E. Rodriguez, Sr. Blvd., Q.C.	6:30 A.M.
ST. JOHN BOSCO PARISH, Arnaiz St., Makati City	6:30 A.M.
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PARISH, San Marcelino, Ermita, Manila	6:30 A.M.
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHEDRAL PARISH Lantana, Cubao, Q.C.	7:00 A.M.
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City	7:15 A.M.
SHRINE OF MARY, QUEEN OF PEACE Our Lady of EDSA, EDSA cor. Ortigas Ave., Q.C.	8:00 A.M.
STA. CRUZ PARISH, Sta. Cruz, Manila	9:30 A.M.
MT. CARMEL SHRINE, Juana Rodriguez, New Manila, Q.C.	6:30 P.M.

We, their family, request relatives, friends and the pious readers to join us in our prayers for the eternal repose of their souls

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PMAP sets seminars/workshops

THE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT Association of the Philippines is sponsoring a program designed to equip participants with knowledge on how to achieve a clean and organized workplace using 5 "S" and Records Management will be held on Feb. 7-8. It is entitled Quality Workplace Using 5 "S" and Records Management. Registration fee is P5,100 for PMAP members and P6,700 for non PMAP members.

A two-day seminar on Managing The Training and Development Function will be held on Feb. 8-9, 2006. Registration fee is P5,600 for PMAP members and P7,100 for non PMAP members. The program is an introductory module on how to effectively manage the training and development in an organization.

The program entitled Managing the Rewards Management Function is scheduled on Feb. 10, 2006. Registration fee is P3,400 for PMAP members and P4,900 for non PMAP Center. It is an introductory module that focuses on the basic principles and processes of rewards management, from planning, design, administration and communication.

A three-day workshop on Competency Design and Development Workshop will be held on Feb. 15-17, 2006. Registration fee is P7,700 for PMAP members and P9,200 for non PMAP members. It is a foundational module designed to prepare the learners to draft their own specific competency framework plan that will eventually be the starting point of a customised competency framework in their organisations.

BUSINESS

Customs exceeds January collection goal

Fighting target for this year set at ₱200B

By Michelle V. Remo and Leila B. Salaverria

EMERGING FROM A HUGE shortfall last year, the Bureau of Customs started 2006 on a positive note by surpassing its collection target for January.

Newly appointed Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said the BOC collected P12.372 billion in January, or 2.4 percent higher than the target for the month of P12.083 billion.

The January collection was also 17.1-percent higher than the P10.567 billion posted in the same month last year.

"It broke the January jinx of the BOC," Morales said. January is considered a lean month and a difficult time to cough up revenue because it comes after the Christmas season.

"We are tightening the monitoring of valuation to address the problem of technical smuggling," Morales said.

He said undervaluation of imports was among the biggest sources of revenue leakages.

The reported January collection came in the form of cash and did not take into account the BOC's non-cash duty collections.

The Department of Finance, its head agency, is studying the possibility of including non-cash duty and tax collection to be included in the revenue-collection performance of the BOC and the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The plan is in line with the proposed shift to accrual accounting system, as practiced in other countries, from the current cash accounting system. The plan, however, has elicited criticisms because it would bloat revenue collection without actually giving the government the power to raise spending.

Morales said the ports that exceeded their respective collection targets included those of Batangas, Manila, Zamboanga, Surigao, Tacloban, Legaspi and San Fernando.

Morales, who was appointed customs chief last December replacing Alexander Arevalo, said the BOC would set an internal collection target of P200 billion this year, or higher than the original target of P190.5 billion.

The P190.5-billion target is 26 percent higher than the BOC's target in 2005 of P151.2 billion, which the revenue agency failed to meet.

Last year, the BOC turned in only P141.7 billion in revenue collection.

The BOC's weak performance last year came on the heels of leadership changes in the agency, starting with the replacement of former Customs chief George Jereos by Alberto Lina. Lina was eventually replaced by Arevalo, who later went back to his old post (deputy commissioner) when Morales was appointed customs chief.

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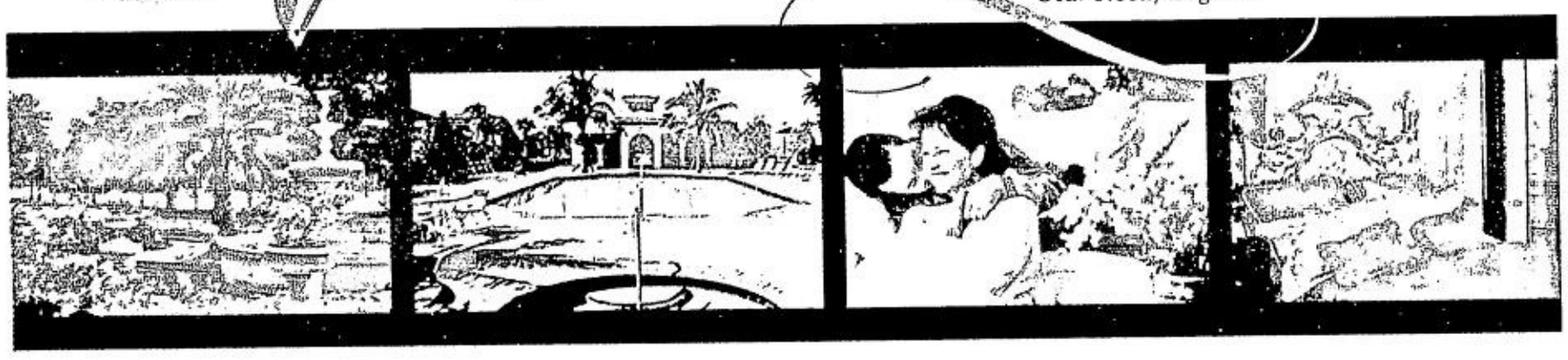

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Benguet Corp. seeks FTAA for Kingking project

By Christine A. Gaylican

BENGUET Corp. HAS APPLIED FOR THE conversion of the tenement status of the copper porphyry portion of its Kingking property in Eastern Mindanao from a mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) into a foreign technical assistance agreement (FTAA).

The application was submitted to the Bureau of Mines and Geosciences, an attached agency of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, for approval.

An FTAA allows up to 100 percent foreign ownership in a mining project while MPSA allows only local companies to own a mining venture and to enjoy incentives provided by the government.

In the proposal submitted to BMG, Benguet said the conversion of its MPSA into FTAA was the best approach to encourage investors to develop the copper porphyry portion of Kingking. The other portion of the Kingking property, which is a prospective source of gold, will remain under the MPSA.

In another development, Benguet is holding exploratory talks with a South Korean company for the development of its coal prospect in Surigao del Sur.

Benguet has several new mineral prospects in Luzon and in Mindanao.

Known as the biggest gold mining company in the Philippines and the sixteenth largest in the world, Benguet Corp. has existing chromite operations in Masinloc, Zambales, known internationally as "Masinloc Ore," and a copper-gold operations in San Marcelino, Zambales.

Aside from the existing Acupan Gold project in Benguet that it now shares with small scale miners, the company is looking at the Kingking Copper-Gold Prospect in Compostela Valley in Davao and the Pantingan Gold prospect in Bataan, according to Benguet assistant vice president Edgar Tabanda.

PLDT considers selling stake in cable TV firm

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE LONG DISTANCE TELEPHONE Co. may sell its interest in a cable television company now controlled by the Lopez group.

"I think it makes sense if we sell Home Cable. They (the Lopezes) are now running the show and we are not very involved in the day-to-day operations," said PLDT president Napoleon Nazareno in an interview.

PLDT's Philippine Home Cable Holdings was merged with two Lopez-owned cable companies in 2003, creating Beyond Cable Holdings (operating under the brand SkyCable). Home Cable owns a third of Beyond Cable.

Nazareno said PLDT was still studying whether it would be better for the company to go into direct-to-home pay TV or offer TV services using Internet Protocol or IPTV.

Both options, according to Nazareno, are being considered. "We have to anticipate the wave of the future," he said.

PLDT seemed to have lost interest in the cable TV business since last year. It earlier offered to swap its interest in Home Cable for control of Lopez phone company, Bayan Telecommunications Inc.

Also last year, PLDT negotiated with former PLDT owner Antonio Cojuangco for the telco's bid to acquire Philippine Multi-Media System Inc., operator of Dream Satellite TV.

Both talks—to acquire Bayantel in exchange for Home Cable and to buy Dream Satellite TV—failed in the fourth quarter. Sources said the price tags for both companies were too high.

Nazareno said Cojuangco's group, given the strategic alliance between Dream Satellite TV and SkyCable, might be interested to buy PLDT's stake in Home Cable. The Lopez group could also opt to buy PLDT's stake in the Lopez-owned cable TV company.

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

BUSINESS*Friday*

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

TOURISTS appreciate the coffee sold by enterprising vendors

Unusual ventures help revive tourism in Baguio

ENTREPRENEURS have taken to selling foodstuff aboard the boats

Text and photos by EV Espiritu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—THE YEAR OF the Fire Dog brings unusual business ideas to this city.

These are fresh attempts to revive the summer capital's tourism market, which suffered from the meningococcemia outbreak that turned away tourists in 2004 and early 2005.

Homemade apparel for dogs and floating sari-sari stores at the Burnham Lake are some of the new businesses sprouting here.

Joel Ramboyong, 35, an ice cream vendor, built a small rowboat and is now selling pretzels, *chicharon* (pork cracklings) and soda to tourists who relax in the middle of the man-made lake.

Ramboyong says it dawned on him that vacationing families who rent boats for an hour become hungry and thirsty, thus his services were essential to keeping tourists happy.

Allan Manuel, who rents out boats, says the floating sari-sari store is boosting rentals at the lake, although the city government has yet to legitimize this innovative trade.

BOATS for rent are a usual sight in Burnham Park

APPAREL for dogs are selling well in this summer capital

Tourists also seek the P12-a-cup of coffee sold by Raffy Hora.

Hora, 23, is one of a dozen vendors, who decided that lugging around containers filled with hot coffee is the ticket to earning from Burnham Park.

Tina Catam, on the other hand, thought that extending a service to the pets of vacationing families meant a potentially high income, so she began tailoring suits fit for dogs.

Her parents sell her dog uniforms along downtown sidewalks, beside dog collar peddlers.

But it is the expansion of convenience stores all over Baguio, which has become a commercial trend here owing to the number of tourists, who enjoy Baguio's chilly nights.

Emilita Ignacio, owner of the Kapamilya Minimart on Marcos Highway, says prospects for midnight shops are high because tourists have developed a vibrant 24-hour lifestyle in this quaint American-built city.

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MODEL	SRP	LOW DOWNPAYMENT							LOW MONTHLY
		DOWNPAYMENT	12	18	24	36	48	60	@50% DP/ 60 mos
Aveo 1.5 M/T*	570,000	69,000	44,605	30,565	23,702	16,868	13,513	11,774	6,698
Aveo 1.5 A/T	610,000	79,000	47,275	32,395	25,121	17,878	14,322	12,479	7,168
Optra 1.6 L M/T	650,000	89,000	49,946	34,225	26,541	18,888	15,131	13,185	7,638
Optra 1.6 L A/T	696,000	89,000	54,042	37,032	28,717	20,436	16,372	14,266	8,179
Optra 1.6 LS M/T	724,000	89,000	56,535	38,740	30,042	21,379	17,127	14,924	8,508
Optra 1.6 LS A/T	770,000	89,000	60,630	41,546	32,218	22,928	18,367	16,005	9,048

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PRSP elects new board for 2006

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF the Philippines (PRSP) recently elected a new board of directors at its general membership meeting Jan. 13 at Hotel InterContinental Manila, Makati City.

The new board members are: Milen Sison de Quiros, Full Circle Communications' president; Maloli K. Espinosa, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp vice president for government, corporate affairs and public relations; Butch S. Raquel, GMA Network Inc head of corporate communications; Ma. Lourdes L. Espina, Total Philippines Corp manager for corporate affairs; Angelito G. Doble, Philippine National Bank senior assistant vice president for corporate affairs and investor relations division; Felisa B. Rosales, Land Bank of the Philippines, head of public relations and organization events; Eduardo S. Alcaraz, ESA Consultants president; Joel D. Lacsamana, Manila Water Company Inc, director for corporate communications; and Ritzi Villarico-Ronquillo, Manila Electric Company, PR officer and head for advertising and special events.

Committee head for 2006 events are: Milen Sison de Quiros, accreditation and ethics; Maloli K. Espinosa and Butch S. Raquel, Anvil Awards; Eduardo S. Alcaraz, National Public Relations Congress; Felisa B. Rosales, PR education and student affairs; Ma. Lourdes L. Espina, membership and programs; Angelito G. Doble, finance/ways and means; Ritzi Villarico-Ronquillo, professional development and publications; and Joel D. Lacsamana, publicity.

The Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) is the country's premier organization for public relations professionals. In its roster are practitioners who represent business and industry, government, non-profit organizations, hospitals, schools, hotels and professional services, among others.

PRSP is a non-stock, non-profit organization established Feb. 19, 1957 by leading PR practitioners in the country. The Society's mission is to advance the practice of public relations by (1) uniting those engaged in the profession; (2) encouraging continuing education of practitioners; (3) generating public confidence in the profession by promoting high ethical practice and encouraging high standards of public service; (4) playing the active role in all matters affecting the practice of public relations; (5) and strengthening the relationships of public relations professionals with various stakeholders.

PR professionals interested in joining the Society may call PRSP secretariat: Sonia Tejada/Ruth Sarmiento at 20-B San Mateo Street, Pasig City at 638-0010 or 638-0012 or e-mail prsociety@prsp.ph or prsociety04@yahoo.com or visit the website www.prsp.ph.

MILEN Sison de Quiros, Full Circle Communications' president

Investing in real estate correctly

A 10-TOPIC SERIES OF LECtures on Investing in Real Estate will be conducted by Urban Institute of Real Estate on Feb. 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22, 27, March 1, 6 and 8 (Monday and Wednesdays) from 1:30 to 6 p.m. at the Maximo Function Room, Second Floor, Max's Restaurant, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City. Invited to attend these seminars are real estate investors, developers, professionals and property owners.

This lecture series would initiate participants to the ABCs of real estate investing and avoid costly mistakes usually committed by inexperienced investors, thus guiding them to a pleasant and successful real estate business. Numerous issues concerning prospective real estate investors, financiers and developers; owners and realty professionals will be discussed.

The topics, which may be attended separately and are all stand alone are as follows: Feb. 6 - Investing in Real Estate: Opportunities, Techniques and What are Needed to Learn before Investing; Feb. 8 - Property Develqpment and HLURB Rules And Regulations; Feb. 13 - How to Start and Manage A Successful Real Estate Brokerage Company; Feb. 15 - Legal Aspect of Sale, Mortgage and Lease with Contract Documentation and Registration; Feb. 20 - Joint Ventures and Syndications for Real Estate Projects; Feb. 22 - Taxation Aspects of Real Estate Transactions and Real Property Assessment; Feb. 27 - Real Estate Finance and Investment Analysis; March 1 - Management of Rental Properties; March 6 - How tos of Real Property Valuation, and March 8 - Making Big Money in Distressed Properties.

This lecture series is accredited by DTI for CEP compliance and will have as lecturers lawyer Dennis Tablizo, noted resource speaker on land laws; lawyer Catherine T. Manahan, director for tax services of Joaquin Cunanan & Co.; and engineer Enrico Cruz, who has more than 35 years experience in real estate, engineering, construction, management and education. Cruz is also a licensed real estate consultant and 1st and 8th placer in the real estate appraiser's and broker's board examinations, respectively, and was invested as a "Real Estate Fellow" by the Philippine Council of Real Estate Educators.

For other details or advanced registration, call Urban Institute at 681-0928 or 0916-4269174, or e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

Power Plant draws winner of Grand Audi A4

EVERYONE WANTED IT—THE MOST luxurious prize of the season, a 2006 Audi A4.

From those who dropped a few raffle stubs to those who entered in the hundreds, all waited with bated breath as Power Plant VP for retail, JP Masakayan, together with PGA Cars Inc president Miguel G. Coyuito, drew the winning entry.

And the keys went to Mykholyn Narvaez of Sacramento, California!

What a way to drive the year! And all because of a simple shopping trip to Rockwell's Power Plant Mall last Jan. 11 when the lucky balikbayan made a handful of purchases at the mall's Lacoste store.

Mykholyn was beside herself with disbelief when informed of her amazing fortune. And with good reason: she was in Hong Kong on her way back to the United States!

What a fashionable start to 2006 as Rockwell, the address of fashionable Manila, and PGA Cars transformed a traditional holiday raffle into the sensational retail event it had become. "Literally, this is just the start!" as AVP-general manager Malou Pineda promises a slew of exciting events to reward loyal Power Plant shoppers.

Tumble Tots launches contest for parents

AN ESSAY-WRITING CONTEST HAS BEEN launched for parents on why they like the way their children's positive personalities are being developed by international pre-school Tumble Tots.

The launch of the "Why I Love Tumble Tots" contest was led by managing director Dyan Bian-Cortez of Tumble Tots Philippines, the national franchise holder of this UK-based international pre-school with over 500 centers in Europe and Asia.

Cortez said the contest would draw first-hand accounts of the parents' experiences with their own children enrolled in Tumble Tots.

"This year's contest winners will receive more exciting prizes than last year's, the first time the competition was held," Cortez added, citing how parents confirmed the effectiveness of the Tumble Tots program.

This international preschool program focuses on the intellectual and motor skills development of children between six months and seven years old.

Based on scientific studies and child development research, the program is designed to develop children's literacy as well as their skills of agility, balancing, coordination and climbing in a safe and loving environment.

The children are guided through each piece of equipment as they gain confidence and independence while having lots of fun.

"A child learns best through play, which is the language of childhood. This helps him/her develop concepts, understand how things and ideas are connected, and develop basic skills in reading, writing and communication," Cortez explained.

"Tumble Tots develops a child's positive personality traits of self-confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline and independence, thus enhancing their personal and social skills and their chances of success in later life," Cortez added.

This comprehensive development comes in stages as the child grows, learns, and explores the world at his own pace, thereby acquiring creativity and sense of achievement while making his self-worth grow from his own feelings of mastery of the tasks he has chosen.

The curriculum is divided into structured, trainer-facilitated programs for gymbabes of 6 months old to walking, walking to 2 years old, 2 to 3 years old, 3 to 5 years old, and gymbobs juniors of 5 to 6 years old and seniors of 6 to 7 years old.

At the end of the program, the children will show tremendous improvements in listening attentively and intelligently, acquiring a well-developed vocabulary and good use of the spoken language in taking part in discussions, read simple words and phrases, perform basic math operations, and manifest writing and social readiness.

Tumble Tots started in the United Kingdom in 1979 and has benefited more than a million children. Since then, the Tumble Tots family has grown to over 500 centers in the United Kingdom, Germany, and Asia-including Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and, now the Philippines. The Asia-Pacific region currently has over a hundred thousand active members.

In the Philippines, Tumble Tots is located at the ground floor of Technoplaza I at Eastwood City Cyberpark in Libis, Quezon City (687-6793, 687-6375, 0917-7010097) and along Mabini Street, Davao City (082-2251847).

Upon enrolling with Tumble Tots, each child receives a personalized membership pack, plus privileged access to many special events organized in the Philippines and other branches worldwide.

Members are automatically insured while participating in Tumble Tots sessions. They also receive special discounts and offers from various partner companies and sponsors of Tumble Tots.

Write your personal history for JSP symposia

ARE YOU A FILIPINO? HAVE YOU been to Japan? Have you worked with Japanese? Did you study in Japan? Are you Japanese? Have you been to the Philippines? Have you worked with Filipinos? Did you study in the Philippines? In other words, do you have a personal history of Philippines-Japan relations? The Japanese Studies Program (JSP) of Ateneo de Manila University, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the resumption of Philippines-Japan relations, invites you to write your personal experience about Japan or the Philippines. The essay should be in English. The encounter(s) should have occurred in any period within January 1956 to December 2006. Selected writers will be asked to present their papers in a series of symposia, the first of which will be in July 2006. They will be given an honorarium of P5,000 each. Send your essay anytime until May 31 to: The Director, Japanese Studies Program, 3rd Floor, Social Sciences Building, Katipunan, Loyola Heights, Quezon City 1108, or e-mail mmartinez@ateneo.edu. Indicate your full name and contact numbers. For inquiries, call Marian at 426-6001, local 5248.

Product FILES

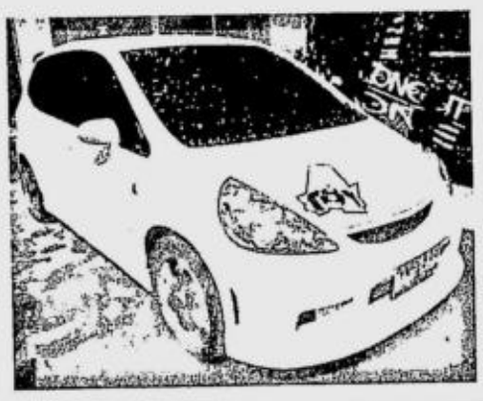
Dynamite for the Jazz

THE COUNTRY'S HOTTEST SELLING SUB-compact sedan, the Honda Jazz, just got even hotter with A-Toy's Mugen Dynamite body kit and spoon ground effects kit.

Manufactured from a combination of plastic and resilient fiber glass materials, A-Toy's Mugen and Spoon ground effects kits are guaranteed to make your Honda a visual delight on wheels. The kits are also designed to improve the aerodynamic qualities of the car.

"All our body kits are bolt-on and are guaranteed to fit like an OEM kit. We extensively tested them before introducing it to the local market," adds Atoy Llave, proprietor of A-Toy's paint and body shop. A-Toy paint and body shop also offers a discounted price on all kits and chins for all car brands up to February as its way of welcoming the year of the dog.

For details on how to make your Honda a standout among the crowd, call 411-5858 or visit A-Toy's showroom in West Avenue, Quezon City, or log on to www.atoybodykits.com



Greenhills for tourists, bargain hunters

THE GREENHILLS SHOPPING COMPLEX IS READY FOR THE HEAVY INflux of tourists and foreign guests as the country's newest international airport, the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport, becomes more accessible to and from Metro Manila because of the redevelopment of the North Luzon Expressway. For a glimpse of Filipino products they can bring home to their loved ones, friends and associates, and how the Filipino enjoys a fiesta atmosphere, tourists and other foreign guests can visit Greenhills Shopping Complex during the 13th Fiesta Fair Manila ongoing until Feb. 5. Greenhills is an ideal destination for tourists looking for world-class Philippine products. Henry G. Babiera, top antique dealer, says Greenhills is the country's "*tiangge* Mecca" and haven of small and medium entrepreneurs, and the country's best flea market for its accessible, fully air conditioned facilities and the many fast foods surrounding modern theaters, recreation centers, and wide parking areas. He also adds that tourists visit the Philippines not only to enjoy beautiful beaches and resorts, feast their eyes on the beautiful tropical scenery and natural attractions, visit historical places and landmarks, but also look for world-class products and goods such as furniture and tropical fruits. This is where Greenhills Shopping Complex comes in.

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Zamboanga Sibugay
Municipality of Tungawan

Loan agreement # PH-P200

INVITATION TO BID

The Republic of the Philippines, through the Department of Education, has received an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan from Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC) in the amount of P1,749 million (Y7,210 million) towards the financing of the Secondary Education and Improvement Project (SEDIP) dated December 28, 1999. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments for the new construction of the different school buildings located at the following schools, to wit:

Package No.	Name of School	Location	Building Type
01	Tungawan NHS - San Isidro Annex	Brgy. San Isidro, Tungawan	1-Storey 4-Classroom Building with toilet 1-Storey Library Building with Guidance & Faculty Room; 1-Storey Home Economics Building and 1-Water Supply System

Disbursement of the ODA loan by JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the loan agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the "Guidelines for Procurement under "JBIC ODA Loans". No party other than the Department of Education shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claims to loan proceeds. The above Loan Agreement will cover only a part of a project cost. As for the remaining portion, the agency will take appropriate measures for finance.

JBIC requires that the bidders and Contractors, as well as DepED-SEDIP under contacts funded with JBIC-ODA Loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standards of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC

1 Will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;

2 Well recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a stated period of time, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA loans if it, at any time, determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt and fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded financed by JBIC ODA loans or other Japanese ODA

Bidding is open to all Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) Registered contractors or joint venture contractors with PCAB license category Small B, General Building

Bidder may obtain further information and acquire the bidding documents from

The Bids and Awards Committee
Municipality of Tungawan
Tel Nos 09215173452
Telefax No.

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting February 10, 2006 until 5 00 p m. of February 17, 2006 upon submission of a letter of intent to the above office and payment of a non-refundable fee of P4,000.00

Pre-bid conference shall be conducted on February 20, 2006 at 2 00 p.m. to be held at Tungawan Munic pal Hall

Submission of bid together with all the documents required in the bid documents must be delivered to the aforesaid venue on March 6, 2006, 2 00 p.m at Tungawan Municipal Hall All bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of the bidders or their legally authorized representatives

(Sgd) Engr. DEMREL CAÑIZAR
Chairperson, BAC

(PDI Jan 27 & Feb 3, 2006)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPERVISORS
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JOB DESCRIPTION:
✔ Will handle a sub-distributor partner to grow the business.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- College graduates from the localities;
- Highly motivated; Aggressive; Hardworking;
- Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills both in English and Filipino,
- Preferably Male, willing to work on a graveyard shift, fast-paced, dynamic and flexible environment.
- ☐ Background in sales is not necessary, but a plus.

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE
to handle the needs of our SUB-DISTRIBUTORS

✔ Applicants must be a resident of Pampanga

QUALIFICATIONS:
- Female,
- College graduates;
- Must have a pleasing personality,
- Highly motivated; Aggressive, Hardworking;
- Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills both in English and Filipino,
- Background in customer service is a plus;
- Computer Literate.

Send your *Resumé* to:
GQY Distribution Group Inc.
Dolores Homesite Extension
(near Jun-Jun's Bibingka Rest., McArthur Highway)
City of San Fernando Pampanga
or call/fax (045) 961-4048

(For Business Dev't Supervisors applicants, please look for Mr. Mar Manabat or Mr. Jess Yap or can email your resumé to jessy@mail.imet.net.ph or gdydistribution.com.ph) and

(For Customer Service Representative applicants, please look for Lynn Marcelo)

Notice is hereby given that the following Official Receipts with series Numbers 4102 to 4111, 4113 to 4122, 4125 to 4129, 4131 to 4133, 4139 to 4140, 4143 and 4149 belonging to Bayer Crop Science, Inc. will no longer be honored by the company in any transaction.

(PDI–Feb. 3, 4 & 5, 2006)

RA Form No 10 1 (LCRO)
Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Province Nueva Ecija
City/Municipality Cabanatuan

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R A Act No 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that Cresencia Velasco Ong has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from MARIETTA to CRESENCIA in the birth certificate Marietta Velasco Ong who was born on June 15, 1956 at Manila and whose parents are xx n/a and Maria Velasco

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition with this Office not later than February 8, 2006.

(Sgd) SUSANA V. DIAZ
City/Municipal Civil Registrar

(PDI--Jan. 27 & Feb. 3, 2006)

ZYLA stringing the 108 black Mala beads

Now selling: Beads that can 'make you good'

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—BEADS, BANGLES AND trinkets have become so ubiquitous in the country that if one strings them into a necklace, it could choke the world many times over.

So how can you sell your stuff in this bead-weary world? How about selling beads that can save your life or simply make you a good person?

Dzi (pronounced "zee") and mala beads are the best selling items in Namaste (Asian Arts and Trade), a local shop specializing in Nepali and Tibetan items.

Shop owner Zyla Shakya says their customers for these types of beads used to be only Buddhists and seasoned travelers.

"Now we get customers from all walks of life," says 22-year-old Shakya, whose mother, Alice Aquino-Shakya, started the family's trading business last year.

Buying the mala and dzi beads is particularly auspicious when done in the New Year, Shakya says.

Dzi are black and white Tibetan beads of etched agate (a common semiprecious silica mineral that has long been used as a gem and ornamental). These are decorated with circular designs known as "Buddha's eyes."

A nine-eyed dzi bead in Namaste costs P950. It is supposed to give its owner good fortune, divine protection, good health, wealth, prosperity from heaven, double longevity, victory over foes, windfall luck and ultimate good luck.

A five-eyed dzi bead costs P750 and is supposed to help one accumulate wealth, good luck and material gain, attract people useful to you, attract more money, valuables and food and basic good fortune.

A three-eyed dzi bead is supposed to give one prosperity, happiness and longevity and costs P425.

For those who are more into the form rather than the function, Namaste also sells porcelain dzi beads in all colors for P35 each.

The dzi beads can be worn as a bracelet or necklace alone or with other semiprecious stones.

The other hot item in Namaste is the mala or the dharma bead, which is a fad in the West Coast of the United States, where most of the Tibetan refugees stay.

Shakya says "mala" means "garland of flowers" in Sanskrit. A mala is composed of either 27, 54 or 108 beads. The number 108 is especially sacred for Buddhists because it represents the nine planets multiplied by the 12 astrological signs.

Among the trendsetters for mala are the Dalai Lama, who prefers the "tiger eye" as beads, and Hollywood actor Richard Gere, who is often seen with a 108 wooden bead mala on his wrist.

Like the rosary, the mala bead is used for prayer, usually in the form of a mantra.

Namaste also sells previously worn mala necklaces from P1,500 up.

The wooden mala sold by Namaste include beads made from sandalwood, teak, rosewood and bodhi and tulsi seeds.

Shakya says the wearer could mix the beads depending on their preferences like health needs, astrological signs and color.

'Bling' promo ups card sales

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO WEAR P600,000 on your finger?

Debbie Koa-Lin, winner of HSBC's Red Mastercard "Love Yourself" promo, was speechless when bank executives Marion Balagot and Martin Cook called her to tell her she had won a GIA-certified 1.39 carat diamond ring.

Just a few weeks before her name was picked, she was kidding her husband Jackson to buy her a diamond ring on their 10th wedding anniversary—not that she is fond of "bling blings" as jewelry has come to be called these days. It was more an endearing joke.

The 1.39 karat G-color diamond with a retail price of P600,000 bought from one of the jewelry shops in Manila is kept in a vault of HSBC. The diamond will be for Debbie and Jackson's third baby—due in March. Fittingly, the baby is a girl, according to the ultra sound and will be named Abigail Joyce.

Debbie says she uses her Red Mastercard for personal expenses although when she got it in 2004, she used it for all of the family's purchases.

"Now it's only my expenses which I load," she says which includes books, groceries and gifts for herself, family and friends.

This is part of the objective of the HSBC Red Mastercard—a credit card that answers women's needs. HSBC Red MasterCard is the first credit card for women in the Philippines. Which is why they chose a diamond as a prize for the promo. Under the promo every P300 charged to the Red Mastercard earned raffle entries to win the ring.

HSBC deputy CEO Martin Cook and Debbie Koa-Lin with the ring that was the object of women's desire for months.

"When we do TV commercials, we look at what women like. Women put other people's needs ahead of theirs but they like bags, shoes, jewelry—depending on the status of the woman," explains Balagot, HSBC VP for credit card marketing.

Travel, she says, is desired by both males and females.

By coming up with the diamond promo, they wanted to attract the women.

Laine Santana, VP for public affairs, says the promo worked as it exceeded card targets by 30 percent meaning they had a 30-percent increase in new cards approved.

Balagot says they had initially wanted to have several diamond rings raffled but HSBC deputy CEO Martin Cook wanted a spectacular one, thus the P600,000 rock.

As for Debbie, she thinks her coming baby is truly a blessed one as she had been receiving many good tidings since her second term.

An accountant who finished top in the CPA board exams, Debbie says she's not frivolous in her needs but likes to travel.

During the interview, she broke into tears when she talked about the death of her 16-year-old Persian cat—her first major purchase via a credit card that was an extension of her dads.

While in the pet shop, another cat kept looking at her with forlorn eyes, she ended up buying two. Price tag for the cats was P10,000. It was near her birthday so dad did not get mad.

Debbie's dad is an interesting man who took up law at age 60 and passed the bar recently. She works for his accounting firm.

Husband Jackson works for his family's engineering firm. They have two older kids.

How a soap became a household name

PROCTER & GAMBLE'S FLAGSHIP brand in the Philippines turned 40 years.

This brand, which has become a household name since 1966, is the only toilet and bath soap dedicated to providing "superior skin germ protection" to help keep families healthy and help make a healthy nation.

Safeguard has dominated the market in 40 years making the brand a part of Filipino life.

P&G president and general manager Johnip Cua best explained Safeguard's status during the launch of a nationwide educational roadshow to promote hygiene in 2002.

Cua said: "We at Procter & Gamble, through Safeguard, have made the promotion of good hygiene habits among Filipinos a priority. Safeguard's vision is to help make a healthier nation. We have been single-minded in our educational message: Practicing proper hygiene habits, with soap that provides superior protection against germs, helps families stay healthy."

That vision, which took shape 40 years ago, was backed by innovations and technologies that helped Safeguard sustain its leadership of the consumer market.

Attaining that vision required the involvement of other sectors. In 1997, P&G, Unicef and five other agencies—the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists, the Department of Education and Culture, the Department of Health, the Philippine Hospital Association, and the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas—formed an alliance to undertake a National Health and Hygiene Program under a campaign called Kalinisan, Kalusugan, Kaunlaran (KKK).

Cua said the project aims to reduce hygiene-related diseases via proper personal hygiene, highlighting the importance and practice of the three steps to good health (hand washing, bathing, keeping surroundings clean)—recognized to be the simplest yet most effective way to prevent illnesses.

"As a market leader, Safeguard continues to create a strong bond with Filipino consumers, touching and improving their lives through partnership programs like Alagang Safeguard, Alagang Nanay for the family, Safeguard Unicef Handog 2big Operation for school children, and Handog ng Safeguard ... Medtechs ng Kinabukasan Scholarship Program for the youth, among others," Cua added.

As part of its 40th year celebration, Safeguard is sponsoring the 2nd International Health and Hygiene Symposium in Manila on Feb. 9-10 where some 150 health and hygiene experts from seven countries are expected to attend.

Soap making seminar in UP set

EARN MONEY BY LEARNING HOW TO make soap.

In line with the government's program to promote livelihood opportunities for the unemployed and entrepreneurs, Golden Treasure Skills and Development Program (GTS-DP) will conduct a one-day seminar on "Soap Making" to be held at UPAA Alumni Center, Magsaysay Avenue, cor. Ylanan Street, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City on Feb. 11, 2006 (Saturday) from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. We are inviting all those people who would like to venture into soap-making business in order to learn the process, technique, procedures on how to make soap and be a part of this once in a lifetime experience.

Among the topics to be discussed are: Theories and Principles of Soap Making, Sourcing of Materials and Pricing on Different Kinds of Soap. Also there will be hands-on experience on the making of different kinds of soap such as liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, bar detergent soap, (all purpose) powder soap, herbal bath soap (papaya , kalamansi , oatmeal, etc.) fabric softener, liquid bleach. Added feature of the seminar is free lecture on smart entrepreneurship, "Tips on How to Start and Manage your Own Soap Business."

Participants will receive certificate of training right after the seminar, including lunch and snacks. Samples of soaps will be given including handouts and more. Those who are interested may call 952-29-34/952-40-28/ 421-85-93/ 436-78-26 and 951-29-66. This seminar is open to all.

How can you make money . . .

From page B2-4

than 100-unit-condo project gave Ayala Land billions in revenue. The magnitude of the marketing task (MMT), another marketing concept worth your mastering, is accountable and manageable.

We've been asked: "How do you sustain marketing success in niche marketing?" Learn from best practice, that is, benchmark. Consider, for example, Nike. This athletic shoemaker has remained a market leader by innovating in more and more niches. It continued to design special shoes for more and more sports and exercises. It went into shoe-owning niches for running, then basketball, hiking, tennis, biking, golf, badminton, and so on. Within each niche, it also grew the niche by developing variants. For example, in basketball, it came out with a Nike Air Jordan, a Pump, etc.

Innovate

Innovating, then, is one key in sustaining nicheing success. Now, there's a difference between an innovation and an invention. Michael Polk, president of Unilever USA, made the distinction by saying that invention was the R&D approach of the 90s: "It's science leading to new products." In today's new product race, Polk says innovation has replaced invention. According to Polk, "innovation is about simpler, smarter value-solutions that are changing the consumer and the status quo of the marketplace." He referred in particular to Starbucks as the model innovator. Starbucks successfully convinced consumers "to buy a $4 cup of coffee in place of a 2-cent cup of supermarket coffee."

The other key is to go for multiple nicheing instead of remaining as a single "nicher". Consider today's No. 1 global pharmaceutical company, Pfizer. This company started and became big by nicheing. It first attended to products for market niches like Terramycin for skin cuts, eye-drops (Visine) for tired eyes, the pain relieving cream Bengay, and the like. It relentlessly applied the market segmentation prescription: "To get big, go small." It started with small markets, that is, niches. In the process, it was more than amply rewarded.

So if you want to explore niche marketing, let's summarize out Marketing Rx's. Start with market niche understanding. Understand the niches available to your business. By understanding we refer to profiling the "market attractiveness" of each of those niches beginning with each niche's market size (and not just population size). Then, understand the priority product needs and values of each niche's consumers, and how satisfied or disappointed these consumers are with the available brands in the niche. And then get realistic about your company's marketing capabilities in effectively participating in each niche. This niche profiling will enable you to rank order the niches in terms of which to enter first and which for later.

Next, learn to innovate so that you will know how to stay owner of a niche or to sustain your significant participation in it. Then proceed to learn how to be a multiple nicher instead of remaining in a single niche.

Incidentally, you say you are a non-marketing executive anxious to learn marketing quickly. You and your non-marketer friends might want to watch for our forthcoming seminar on "Marketing for Non-marketers" this coming April.

E-mail questions to MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412. God bless!

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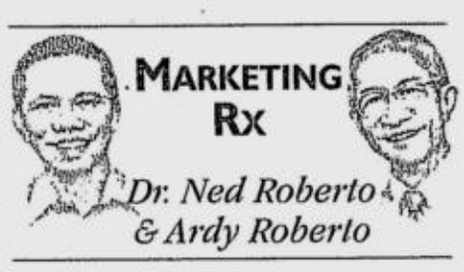
How can you make money in a niche market?



Q: I'M NEW IN MARKETing. My background is accounting. Because I keep dabbling in marketing, I've recently been transferred to marketing as a product manager. We're in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) business but we're a local firm. The marketing training that our company's training budget approved for me consisted of attending marketing seminars and conferences. I recently attended a marketing seminar where one of the speakers talked about market segmentation. In one portion of his talk, he said mass marketing is dead. It's marketing to market segments that's the name today of the marketing game. In fact, he said, it's fast becoming a niche marketing game. He did not elaborate on niche marketing but simply defined a niche as "a small market that larger companies like the multinationals won't bother about." I wanted to ask a question but there was not enough time during the Q&A period. My accounting training led me to wonder how my company can make money in a niche. After all, the speaker himself said that a niche is a small market.

A: In our own marketing seminars, we've been asked this question before by those new to marketing or non-marketers who have been transferred to marketing or given marketing responsibilities. The key marketing concept to apply here is the market size concept. When you heard the reference to a "small market," that's about the niche's population size. It's the population size that's small. The market size concept tells you that a niche's population size is not that niche's market size. Let's recall the market size definition:

(Niche population size) x (Niche product usage frequency) x (Niche average spending) = Niche market size

As you can readily calculate in your accounting trained mindset, the two multipliers of "usage frequency" and "average spending" can make a niche with even a very small population size become a larger market size than a market segment with a population size that's multiple of a niche's.

Consider our favorite example of the Class AB niche as compared to the large population sized segment of Class DE for vitamin. In population size, the DE segment is about 7 times the AB niche. But because the average AB niche consumer takes vitamins everyday, twice a day, it has an annual usage frequency of 730 (365 x 2) versus the average DE segment consumer's annual usage frequency of 6. The average DE consumer takes vitamins only when he/she is sick. Average illness occurrence is twice a year at an average period of 6 days per illness. Vitamin consumption is at an average of half the illness period. So these statistics make for an annual average usage frequency of 6 [= (6 days of illness)/2) x (2 times a year)].

Just taking in consideration the first multiplier, namely, usage frequency, the AB niche has a market size of 730 [=(1 population size index) x (730 usage frequency)] versus the DE segment's market size of only 42 [= (7 population size index) x (6 usage frequency)]. That means the market size of the AB "small" market niche is at least 17 times the market size of the DE "large" market segment! We said "at least" because this is considering only one of the two multipliers for computing market size. In population size, it's the reverse: the DE segment is seven times the AB niche's population size. So always think "market size" and not "population size." Your making money comes much more from market size and not just from population size.

Examples of "nicheing"

Today, market niches are all around you ... even in the mass market. Look at Unilever's deodorant brand, "Axe." This brand successfully made sales and profit by "nicheing" into the population of young men, not all of them, but only those young men who are "after a deep relationship with a girl." That's a niche, a small population size. But their usage frequency is high and willing to pay a premium for a deodorant specifically tailored to their needs. We understand from our Unilever friends that it is now the main contributor to the more than 10 percent growth in the company's participation in the deodorant category! There's a local equivalent (though in a different category) to Axe. That's Eskinol's "Master", the Eskinol for a special niche of young men.

The extreme in market nicheing is in real property marketing. Look at Ayala Land. Its initial target market was the niche of all niches: the very few and countable Class AAA consumers. Yet selling to this niche, say, a less

HOW CAN/ B2-3

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

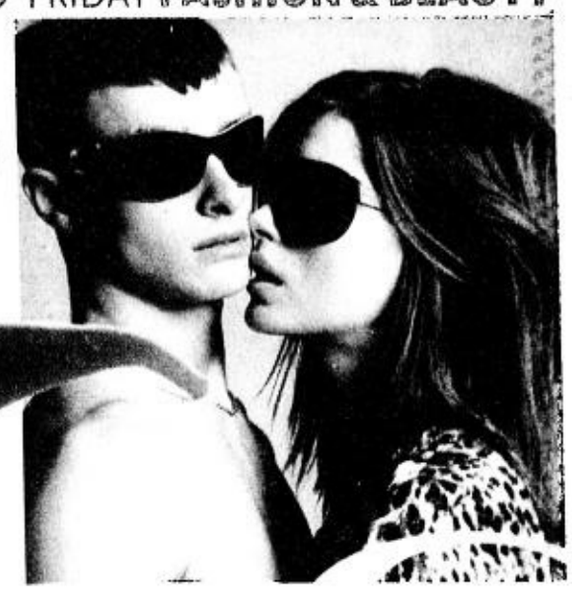
MONDAY STYLE • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

FACE-HUGGING metal easy-rider glasses

METAL-FRAME spectacles

Bold visions

SUNGLASSES in acetate with logo engraved in contrasting colors on the temple length



THE Roberto Cavalli Eyewear line, produced by Marcolin, cleverly interprets the moods of the Italian designer's fashion collection.

The collection, which features both sunglasses and prescription frames, is expected to hit Manila stores soon. In fact, sunglasses are initially available at Rustan's Makati and Alabang.

The line offers close-fitting and daring shapes in bold colors and intricate details: cross-over on the bridge, with appealing knot intersections, or temples enriched by applications in *diamante*, in designs suggesting the symbols of the snake.

Large and enveloping masks are making a comeback. They have a double bridge coming either plain or cutting into the lens to form a heart right in the center of the frame in the metal versions. The acetate versions are in decidedly retro style, harking back to the '70s, all of them very large, in pearly or lacquer effect colorings.

The acetate models come in dark tones such as gloss black and dark brown. At times the logo is positioned on the temple, on a horizontal plaque, or on the cusp between front and temple.

The Robert Cavalli Eyewear line is exclusively distributed by The Optoline, Inc. in the Philippines.

LARGE and close-fitting Cavalli eyewear

GLAMOROUS combined sunglasses

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LAS VEGAS high-rollers Robert and Minda Fernandez with Karen Davila

BIMBO Cerrudo

HARD-TO-BEAT singer Pinky Marquez

FAB Robert Seña

HEY, I'M 40! The celebrator Carina Cruz with 40 cakes brought in by her 40 invitees

Surprise birthday bash; hot golf tournament

CLOSEST of pals forever. Mike Rieta and Louie Cruz

TAJ Tajanlangit and Thomas Adams

VIVIAN Velez and husband, international businessman Sam Groskof

CITO Beltran

LOWEST Gross champion Lucio "Bong" Tan Jr.

HSBC'S SVP for operations Claire Ann Yap, Visa International country manager James Dixon and Davao-based Samuel Labang

PAL VP for marketing support Felix J. Cruz

MABUHAY Miles Elite members Wilbert Tan, Johnny Siao, Jesus Jalandoni and Raymond Lazaro

ONE THING ABOUT EXPERTS IS THAT they can do what they do best with their eyes shut, *palanggas*. But in the case of the popular events management specialist, Thoughts and Notions, they did it with their lips sealed as well.

Brilliant **Carina Cruz**, owner of Thoughts and Notions, organized a simple birthday dinner for her friends and clientele at the poolside of the exclusive Paseo Parkview Suites.

It was a chill-out evening of caviar, salmon, fresh oysters and great fun. But when Carina's rah! rah! team is gathered, *palanggas*, it can't be "just another event."

So Carina's friends all came to give her a rousing greeting: television's **Karen Davila**; **Cito Beltran**, host of "Straight Talk"; *numero uno* publicist **Louie Cruz** and his brother, **Mato Cruz**; **Sandro Rieta** of Mc Sandro Bistro, everyone's favorite restaurant in Boracay; **Larry Leviste**; **Rowena Cuyco**; and **Dboy Trofeo**.

My big boss, **Letty Jimenez Magsanoc**, with **Nancy Carvajal**, joined the bash. By this time, **Armand Cruz**, **Al Bantol**, **PJ** and **Ramelyn Francisco**, **Rey Memjie**, **Peggy Santos**, **Fides Alejandro**, **Pia Fernandez**, **Verna Villanueva**, **Roy Repalda**, **Willie Munji** and **Cesar Kindara**, plus others like them, had a blast to the max.

Suddenly, Carina was pulled aside by one of her guests, who was having what appeared to be a lover's spat with her boyfriend in the midst of the party. The celebrator took no time in consoling her pal. Little did Carina know, that as she rejoined her party, 40 cakes to match her age, each cake with a candle, were brought to her. It was a surprise gift from **Louie Cruz**!

Carina was floored. Four of her close chums—singers **Isay Alvarez**, **Robert Seña**, **Pinky Marquez** and **Bimbo Cerrudo**—belted out an amazing a cappella birthday song and got the happening on a roll until way, way past the crowing of the roosters.

That night was definitely a testimony to how an occasion, however ordinary, can be made extraordinary by creative staging. The difference was that the tables were turned, making the usually cool Carina awed.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

Golf for miles

Hey, all those golf lovers and members of the Mabuhay Miles Elite and Premier Elite of Philippine Airlines' frequent flyer program, got together at the Riviera Golf Club for the annual Mabuhay Miles Elite invitational Golf Tournament, *palanggas*.

Young taipan **Lucio "Bong" Tan Jr.**, hotshot executive vice president of Fortune Tobacco Corp., scored a cool three over par 74 at the tough Langer course.

Another taipan, **Stewart Go**, president of Philippine Fabrikoid Inc., carded a net 68, on a gross round of 79.

Needless to say, *palanggas*, both gentlemen emerged as the day's big winners. There were a record 300 players during the awesome event, superbly sponsored by Airbus, GE Aircraft Engines, HSBC, Metrobank Card Corp., dahlings.

Valeriano "Bones" Floro actually finished three strokes better than **Stewart Go**, but he had a lower handicap and had to settle for Class A honors with a net 69.

This tournament had for its corporate sponsors AAR International, Adidas Philippines, DHL Express and Subic Bay Distribution.

The Class C crown was hotly contested as **Vince Solon**, **Ferdinand Dimaisip** and **Edwin Arceo** carded net 70s. But in the end, V. Solon brought home the bacon.

Banker **Rommel Latinazo**'s net 72 enabled him to top Class D, over **Gaudencio Valerio** and Cinderella Marketing Corp. vice president **Richard Santos**, who both had net 73s.

Nestlé Philippines, Nivea Sun, Samsonite, Spring and Visa International were some of the event's minor sponsors, with Century Park as official hotel of the tournament, *palanggas*.

Hot lady **Lilibeth de Villa** dominated the ladies' division with a super impressive 72 out of a gross 91, while **Jose Antonio Lim** ruled the guests' division with a net 68 from 81.

Après a totally great game, it was time to party. Fantastic entertainment was dished out by **Asia Agcaoili**, **Gino Padilla**, and **Sheree**. The emcee, our *palangga* **Archie Lacson**, kept the members in complete attention.

On top of the major prizes, Philippine Airlines gave away Mabuhay Class tickets to Los Angeles, Honolulu, Sydney, Saigon and Hong Kong. Now if that ain't awesome, I don't know what is.

Singapore roadshow

The "Uniquely Singapore; Uniquely Podium" event launched the Singapore Tourism Board-Philippines (STB-P) series of fun-destination roadshows.

The highlight was a dance extravaganza with the Sindaw Philippine Performing Arts Guild performing the cultural dances of Singapore's four major races—Chinese, Malay, Indian and Eurasian. It was amazing to watch this performance as we got a glimpse of Singapore's rich and colorful culture.

Several lucky guests took home fantastic giveaway items from STB-P. The top prizes were several air tickets to Singapore, *natch*!

Members of the Singaporean community were *tres* visible. Leading the pack were Singapore Ambassador **Lim Keng Hua** and Keppel Properties Philippines country head **Sin Wai Meng** and vice president **Ng Chin Fei**. Also, there were representatives from the travel industry.

Podium shoppers who met the minimum required amount of purchases got to spin the Uniquely Singapore wheel for a chance to win 20 free air tickets to the Lion City. Wow!

STB-P will bring the roadshow to other malls. It has been mounting the Singapore destination roadshows for three years now and the activity has been a huge success, *palanggas*.

KEPPEL Properties Phils. country head Sin Wai Meng, STB-P area director for Philippines and Brunei Rocson Chang, SM marketing communications group vice president Millie Dizon, Singapore Ambassador Lim Kheng Hua and Keppel Properties Phils. vice president Ng Chin Fei

THE PODIUM mall manager Stephen Tan

NANCY Harel with our supah pal Tim Yap

TAKING a breather on the greens. Airbus area sales director Len Battrum

GOLF aficionados Rudy Gamut, Gene Lim, Camilo Bitong and Theodore de Jesus

OVERALL net champion Stewart Go (center), PAL EVP Henry So Uy (left) and PAL president Jaime Bautista (right)

CEREMONIAL tee-off by PAL president Jaime Bautista

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines High School Class 1956 celebrates its golden anniversary Feb. 22-28. Call 8177905, 8151538, 8131452, 7512232, 0919-2505512, and 0919-6948788 during office hours, or fax 8181387, or e-mail argus@netgazer.com.ph. In photo: Malabon City Mayor Canuto "Tito" Oreta (center) with the steering committee members (from left): Jose Pascual, Class 1956 alumni president; Melchor Elegado, chair; Frank Libatique; and Rey Asuncion, head Ways and Means.

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Innovating Lifelong Education

Jewelry show opens today

JEWELRY ENTHUSIASTS WILL HAVE THE opportunity to see and purchase Philippine-made jewelry from nine of the country's foremost jewelers all in one show. "Mag-aalahas: The Philippine Jewellery Show" will be held Feb. 3-5 at the left wing of Glorietta 4. It is organized by the Guild of Philippine Jewellers Inc. (GPJI). The fair features the collections of Acme Jewelry Inc., Alcon Jewelry Inc., Dam Good Stuff Inc., Goldcrafters, Goldenas Jewellery Inc., M. Lhuillier Jewellers, New Life Jewelry, Oro Y Plata, and Sterling Gifts Inc.

GOINGS ON

The "Mag-aalahas" show is one of the activities lined up in celebration of the guild's 20th anniversary this year. Philexport is partially funding the event. Call 7281722 or 7281726.

SALE. Folded and Hung (F&H) treats loyal and new customers to an "End of Season Sale," until Feb. 28. Big discounts await shoppers.

HOMECOMING. St. Scholastica's San Fernando Alumni Association will hold a grand homecoming 9 a.m. -3 p.m. tomorrow at St. Scholastica's Academy, Cer-hill San Agustin, San Fernando City, Pampanga. Call Tachi de Leon Narciso at (0917) 8649728, Polly Chua Basilla (0919) 6506800, and Nora Ku-Pangilinan (0917) 6220026.

GARDEN EXHIBIT. The Ayala Alabang Village Garden Club (AAVGC) will hold its annual garden exhibit starting today until Feb. 12 at the village's park on Narra Street, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City. This year's theme is "Gardens of the World Part II." T.

GARDEN FESTIVAL. Flora Filipina Expo, an international garden festival, will be held Feb. 23-March 5, at Clamshell 1, in Intramuros. During the formal launch of the expo, a memorandum of agreement that would make Philippine gardens tourist destinations was signed by the Department of Tourism, Philippine Orchid Society and Philippine Horticultural Society.
Expected to attend the event are local and foreign hobbyists, plant experts, traders, and tour organizers. A conference will be held at the Manila Hotel on the latest technologies, trends and global demands of the horticulture industry. Call 4001993 or visit www.philorchid society.org.

SEMINARS. CFS Creative Training and Management is holding the following seminars: "Developing Excellent Business Communication Skills" (9 a.m.-5 p.m., Feb. 10), "Effective Supervisory Skills" (9 a.m.-5 p.m., Feb. 17,), "Purchasing Management" (9 a.m.-5 p.m., Feb. 11), "Warehouse Management" (9 a.m.-5 p.m., Feb. 18) and "Managing Your Money Effectively" (9 a.m.-12 noon, Feb. 23). Call 8697960, 8232358, 8234825.

SINGING TILT. Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall holds "Melodies on Strings" acoustic singing contest. It's open to amateur singing couples 15 years old and above; one should sing while his/her partner plays a musical instrument. Get an entry form at the ad and promo department and attach a P300 single or accumulated purchase receipt from the Department Store dated Jan. 2-Feb. 6, with a photocopy of the couple's birth certificates or any valid IDs with birthdates and 3R close-up photos. Finals will be held 4 p.m., Feb. 10, at the Entertainment Center. Grand winners will get P15,000 cash and gift certificates. Call 6811401 local 109.

INVENTORY SALE. The Ayala Museum Shop is holding an inventory sale until Feb. 28. Avail of up to 50-percent discount on Museum Shop products that are inspired by the Museum's special exhibitions and permanent collection. The Museum Shop is at the Ayala Museum, Makati Avenue corner De la Rosa Street, Greenbelt Park, Makati.
The shop is open 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Monday to Friday; and 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. Call 7577117 local 32.

REVIEW PROGRAM. De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde offers a review program for the Foreign Service Officer's Examination, April 18-May 18. The review program will cover the following subjects: Philippine Foreign Policy, International Law, Treaties and International Organizations, Consular and Diplomatic Practice, International Economics and Trade: Theory and Practice, Politics and Governance, World and Asian History, Environmental Diplomacy, and Special Concerns and Issues in International Politics and Diplomacy. Program fee is P8,000. Classes held 6-9 p.m. Registration is open until April 3 only. Call the Consular and Diplomatic Affairs Department, School of Multidisciplinary Studies of DLS-CSB at 5267441 to 47 local 202, or e-mail sms@dls-csb.edu.ph.

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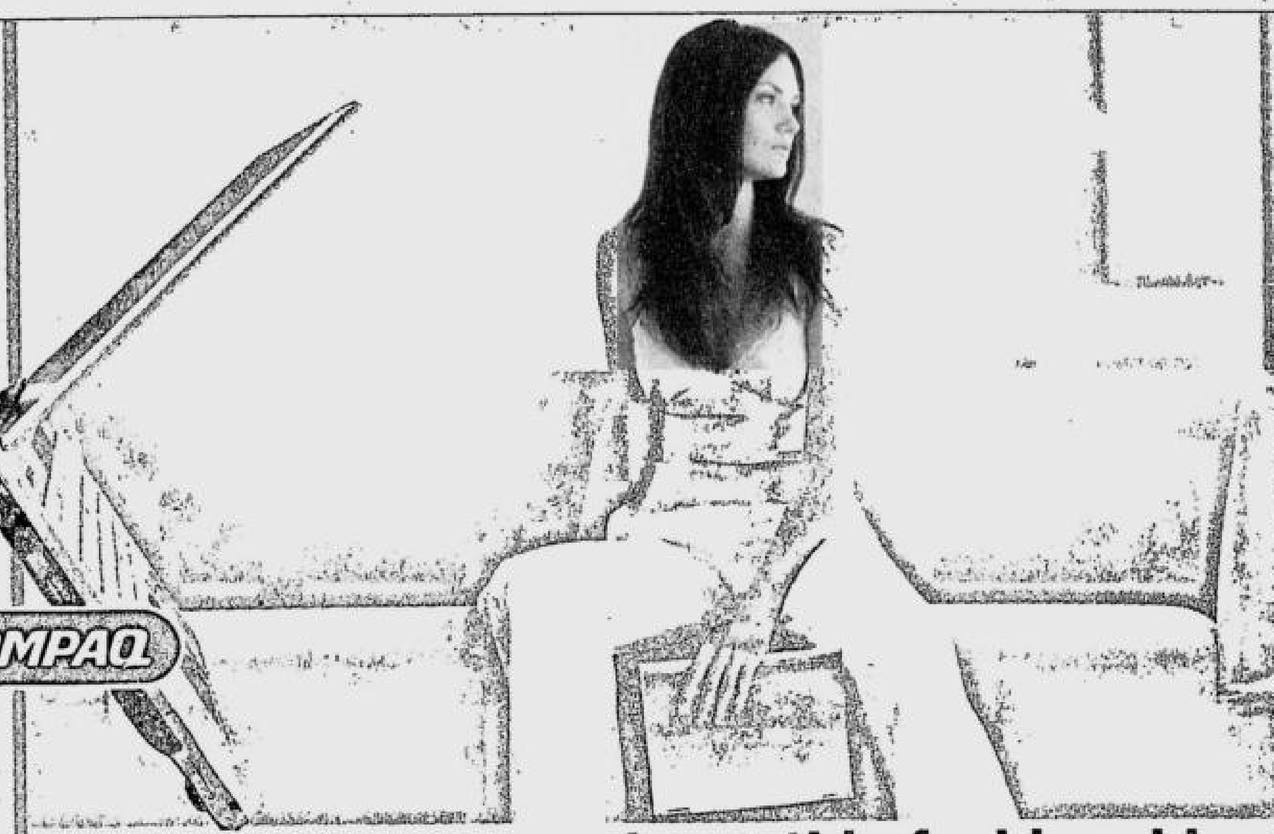

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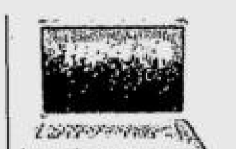

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Wrapping up in Guam

AVA Abejar in ethnic banana ensemble with *lukot* wrap as accent

FASHION DESIGNER AND CELEBRATED WRAP artist Dita Sandico Ong brought her ingenious use of natural woven fabrics and indigenous weaves to Guam upon the invitation of the Pangasinan Ladies Club of Guam, a local civic organization headed by Lita Gagaoin.

The fashion show featured more than 80 outfits worn by over 50 models. The pieces ranged from children's dresses to modern Filipina bridal finery and the new DSO-OMO barong.

Men's beachwear, worn by local Chamorro in multicolored fly pants and bright sarongs, opened the show, followed by ladies in

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Want Sam?

NIKE OUTLET SCORES HIGH AT PASEO DE SANTA ROSA

If Nike says just do it, it meant every word. At least that was how this popular sporting brand made a niche in Sta. Rosa, Laguna. All it did was find a good spot to showcase its quality, markdown-priced shoes and gear. Greenfield City's commercial hub, Paseo De Santa Rosa turned out just perfect.

Says owner Miguel Celdran, " Actually, I looked for a place in the North like Bulacan but I was not able to find a place as great as Paseo De Santa Rosa. So, when a space was offered to me I grabbed it!"

Just Nike

Nike is one among the pioneering outlet stores in Paseo De Santa Rosa. Celdran was only too happy the store easily picked up not only by customers in and around Sta. Rosa but Manila as well, "It was a pleasant surprise really. Initially, we thought we would only be catering to the local market. When Paseo De Santa Rosa suddenly became a shopping destination, it opened our store to a bigger market."

Paving the way for the opening of stores in Alabang and Lipa, Batangas, Celdran was adamant the one in Paseo De Santa Rosa ranks high in sales, "When I opened a store here, it was merely to sell our so-called dated products. It was more like a clearance house. Somehow, it became the most successful outlet store with sales comparable to Manila shops."

Swoosh is it

A store bearing a simple yet distinctive swoosh at the entryway does not need the hype just to get noticed. A lot of local residents and transient shoppers usually make a routine stop here to check out what's available.

Celdran believes this so because it offered a lot of choices, "Most of the goods sold here come from our Manila stores so shoppers can choose from a wide array of footwear and apparel at discounted rates."

Bigger and Better Paseo De Santa Rosa With Paseo De Santa Rosa's current expansion, Celdran feels confident it will create new opportunities not only for Nike but for other brands as well, "I'm very impressed at the way Greenfield Development Corporation is managing Paseo De Santa Rosa. Now that Nike is doing pretty well here, I am looking into opening fashion outlets to carry our brands like United Colors of Benetton, Sisley and Gas jeans.

Celdran is quite optimistic fashion brands will be equally successful, "If the development continues, I'm sure our fashion brand outlets will do extremely well at Paseo De Santa Rosa."

Paseo De Santa Rosa is the retail and commercial component of Greenfield City. It is envisioned to become a town center that provides valued services catering to varying customers' taste and preferences.

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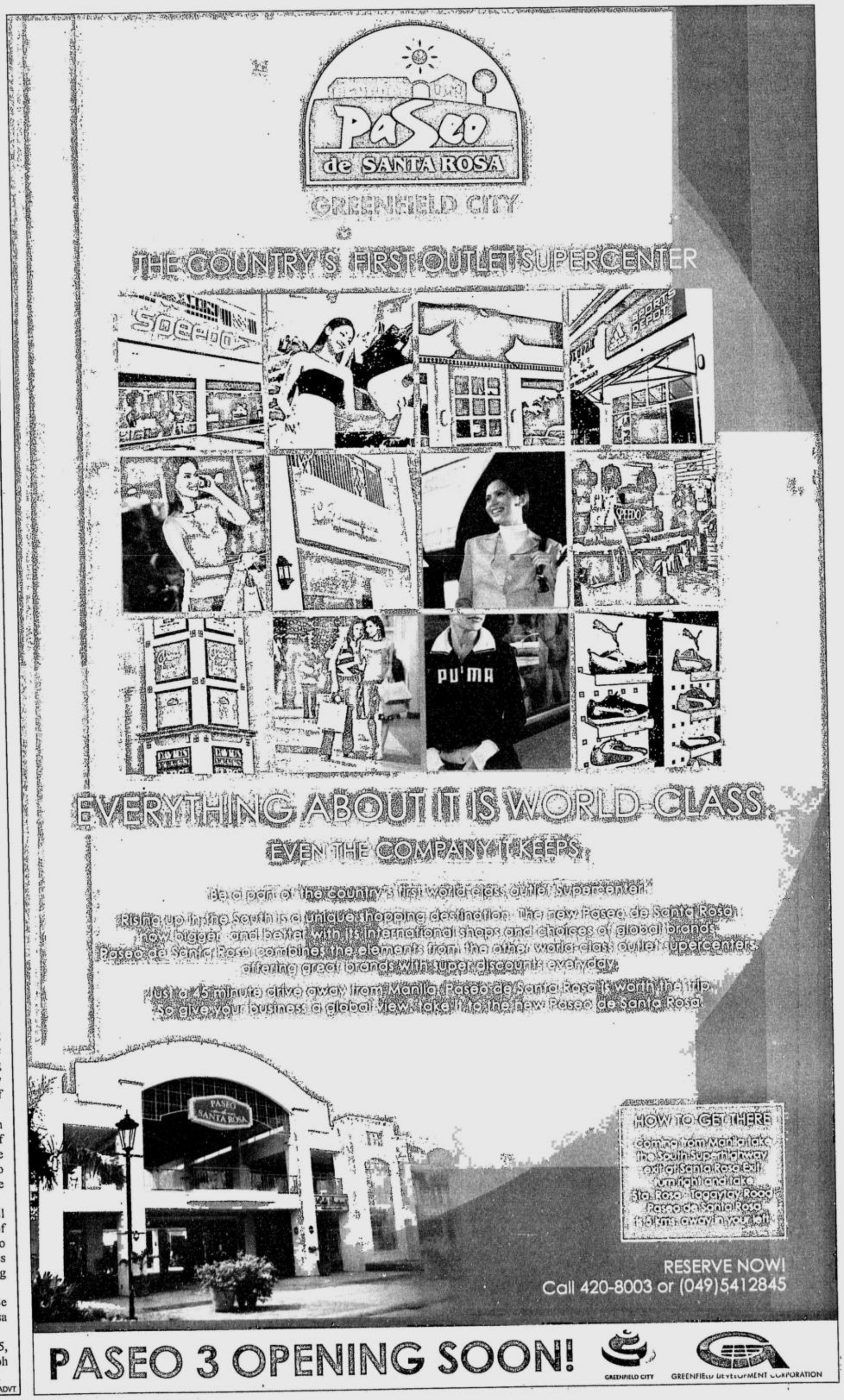
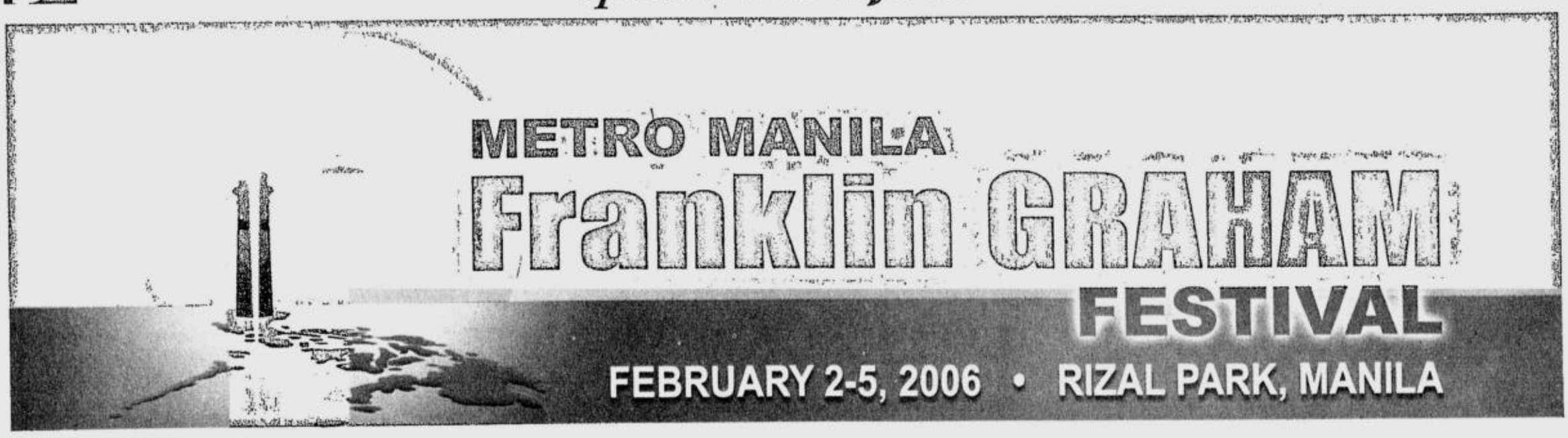


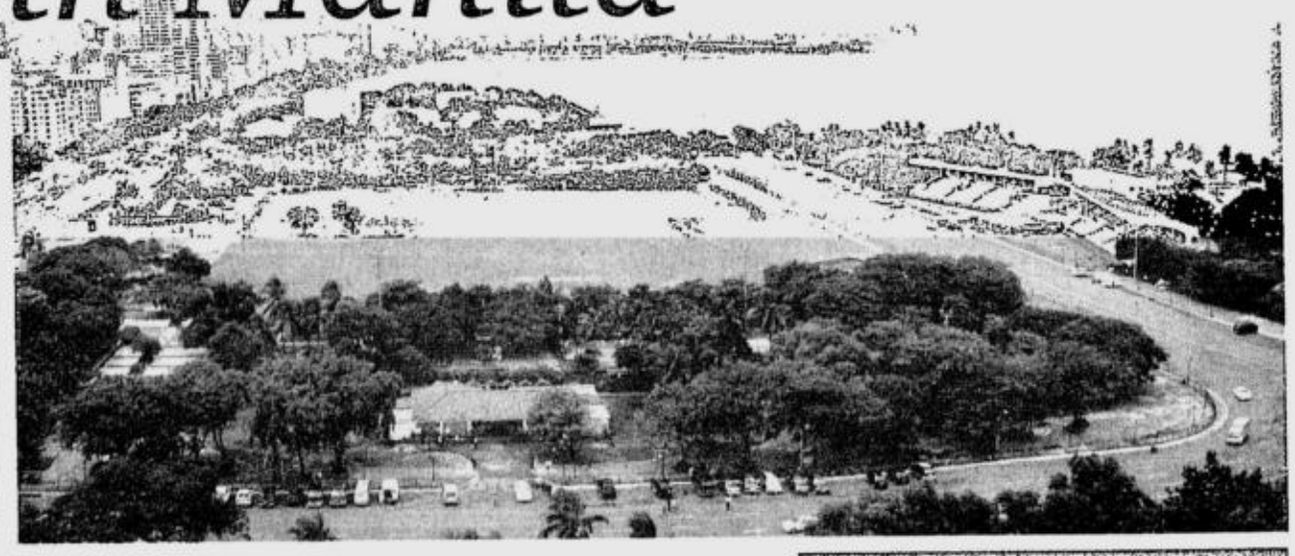


Franklin Graham, son of evangelist Billy Graham, *in Manila*

By Tanya Sevilla for the MMFGF

Manila, 19 January 2005. Franklin Graham, the son of the renowned evangelist Billy Graham, is in Manila to carry out the great commission to deliver Christ's message of salvation. Hope abounds in the Philippines as the Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival takes place at the Rizal Park, Quirino Grandstand, on February 2 to 5, 2006.

Rev. Franklin Graham



The Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival is an evangelical event that aims to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the greatest number of Filipinos, beginning in Metro Manila and effectively to the whole nation. Evangelist Franklin Graham was invited to conduct the festival by the evangelical Christian churches in the Philippines composed of the Alliance of Baptist Councils (ABC), National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC), Philippines for Jesus Movement - Jesus is Lord Church (PJM-JIL), and the Independent Churches and Christian Organizations with the cooperation of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

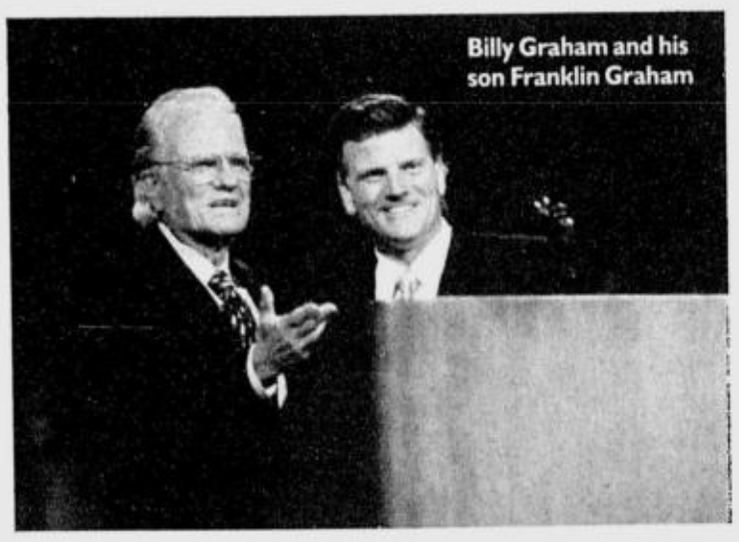
Franklin Graham's father, Dr. Billy Graham, visited the Philippines in September 1977 for the Metro Manila Billy Graham Crusade, which was also held at the Quirino Grandstand. Continuing the work his father started, Franklin has led as many as five evangelistic festivals each year around the world. Graham is committed to visiting many smaller areas where his father's crusades normally would not go. This is Franklin's first festival in Asia and will use the Philippine Festival as a gateway to more festivals in this region. Already, the Okinawa, Japan Festival is set for November 2006.

The Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival is part of a worldwide mission to mobilize the greatest number of people to hear the Gospel and be invited to respond, to be disciplined and integrated in the local Church to worship and serve the Lord.

Volunteer organizers of the Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival are already conducting prayer rallies, training sessions, and other preparations to receive anticipated large crowds at each night of the festival. Preparations began as far back as January 2005.

Everyone is invited to go to the festival and bring their friends and loved ones along to worship, pray, and hear God's message of hope and freedom. The MMFGF happens at 6:30 p.m. from February 2 to 4 (Thursday to Saturday) and 5:00 p.m. on February 5 (Sunday). Parents are invited to bring their children to "Pistang Pambata" on February 4 at 8:00 a.m. For more information, call the Festival Office at 916-3014 or check the website at www.mmfgf.org.

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association Fact Sheet


Billy Graham and his son Franklin Graham

Chairman: William Franklin "Billy" Graham II since 1950
President/CEO: William Franklin Graham III since 2000
Founded: 1950, by Billy Graham
Programs: The following are the ministries of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

- Billy Graham Crusades - Billy Graham has preached the Gospel to more than 210 million people in live audiences at hundreds of crusades, missions, and evangelistic rallies, including Mission World and Global Mission, in North America and around the world. He also developed the early use of television specials in the 1950s, which today are regularly broadcast in prime time in almost every market in the United States and Canada, reaching an average of 3 million households per telecast.
- Franklin Graham Festivals - Since 1989, Franklin Graham has preached the Gospel at more than 100 evangelistic festivals in 33 states and 17 other countries. The BGEA appointed Franklin Graham CEO in 2000 and president of the organization in 2001. He has served as first vice-chairman of the BGEA since 1995. Franklin also serves as president of Samaritan's Purse, an international relief organization based in Boone, N.C.
- My Hope - Through this innovative movement for personal evangelism across a nation, churches and Christian families are encouraged, trained, and mobilized to open their homes to friends and neighbors and share the Gospel using television broadcasts produced by the BGEA in the local languages. Since the program was launched in 2002, 1.6 million people in 11 countries have made decisions for Christ. More than 704,000 of those were in Colombia in 2004, marking the largest evangelistic campaign in a single country in BGEA history.
- Decision Magazine - The official monthly publication of the BGEA, founded in 1960, has a circulation of more than one million - making it one of the largest religious periodicals in the world. Issues include messages by Billy and Franklin Graham; Bible studies and devotional helps; practical features on Christian living; inspiring personal testimonies; event reports; and news of evangelism around the world.
- Billy Graham Training Center at The Cove - This retreat center opened in 1991 to offer multi-day seminars on a variety of Christian subjects. Located on 1,500 woodland acres in Asheville, N.C., the Billy Graham Training Center features nationally recognized speakers throughout the year. The Training Center also offers the Cove Camp for youth ages 9-15, to experience spiritual growth and adventure.
- Schools of Evangelism - A group of schools to train pastors and Christian leaders to more effectively reach out to their local communities. A typical School of Evangelism consists of 2 ½ days of intense training in the preparations to do evangelism through the local church and then to teach individuals who place their faith in Christ. More than 109,000 church leaders have participated in the schools in North America since their inception in 1967.
- World Wide Publications - Millions of copies of Billy Graham's books, available in 38 languages, have been distributed around the world. Billy Graham titles include Peace With God, The Holy Spirit, How To Be Born Again, Angels: God's Secret Agents, Facing Death and The Life After, Storm Warning, and Just As I Am, Graham's memoirs.
- World Wide Pictures - Since the debut of Mr. Texas, in 1951, Billy Graham evangelistic films have been translated into 38 languages and viewed by more than 250 million people in theaters and churches and on TV. World Wide Pictures has produced and distributed more than 125 productions - from 15-minute television programs to some 25 feature-length films, including The Hiding Place, PowerPlay, Joni, A Vow to Cherish, The Ride, Road to Redemption, The Climb, and Last Flight Out. These films are shown at prisons and correctional facilities nationwide.
- Cutting - Edge Electronic Evangelism

Radio Programs - The weekly "Hour of Decision" radio program, begun in 1950, is broadcast on Sundays to virtually every part of the United States and most areas of Canada. Other countries around the world receive the broadcast via short wave and medium wave radio in four different languages.

Telecasts - Television broadcasts of select Billy Graham Crusades and Franklin Graham Festivals air across North America during prime time. An average of 250 stations - including some 90 percent of network affiliates - across the United States and Canada have carried the telecasts in prime time four to six times annually.

Satellite Broadcasts - The BGEA's strategic, creative use of broadcast media was demonstrated in 1995 through Global Mission. This conference in Puerto Rico was the most complex technological worldwide effort and the largest evangelistic outreach in the history of the church. The event was transmitted via satellite to a total of 10 million people at 3,000 locations in 185 countries and territories.

- Billy Graham Response Center - To provide information and service to people with spiritual needs and questions, the Response Center opened in June of 1998. During 2003, the center handled more than 23,000 e-mails and 200,000 calls from individuals using the toll-free number, 1-877-2GRAHAM (1-877-247-2426). The Response Center takes calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Christian Guidance - The Christian Guidance Department in the Charlotte office handles letters, telecast follow-up forms, phone calls, and e-mail from an average of 130,000 people annually - many of whom are in desperate circumstances, experiencing every conceivable type of problem. A trained staff responds to spiritual needs and matters of biblical concern.
- TV / Telephone Ministry - The TV / Telephone Ministry in conjunction with the Billy Graham event telecasts began nationwide in March 1981 and has since served more than one million people. From the privacy of their homes, people are encouraged to call a telephone number on their screen to receive spiritual help.
- Internet (www.BillyGraham.org) - The BGEA Internet outreach includes all of the organization's ministries and special events online. In 2003, the BGEA Web sites logged more than 5.4 million visits with some 6, 400 visitors registering a commitment to Jesus online. Web site visitors can listen online to the "Hour of Decision" radio program, watch webcasts of events, read Decision magazine, or find response to spiritual questions.

Offices: After 50 years in Minneapolis, the organization has relocated its headquarters to The Billy Graham Parkway in Charlotte, N. C. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association also has offices in Canada, Australia, Great Britain, and Germany.

About Franklin Graham

On a cold November night in 1983, 31-year-old Franklin Graham, son of evangelist Billy Graham, was asked to preach for the first time in his life. Longtime friend and evangelist John Wesly White urged Franklin to share the pulpit for one night. To Graham, whose job as the head of relief organization Samaritan's Purse often put him in bullet-dodging, life and death situations, the task was a daunting one. Not only did he have to overcome the pressure of following in his father's mighty footsteps, but he also had to overcome a rebellious past that include drinking, smoking, and running from God.

Franklin reluctantly accepted the invitation and preached that night, with surprising results, especially for the son of Billy Graham. Not one of the 1,000 people in attendance responded when Graham issued the call for them to "come forward" and give their lives to Christ. Following that disheartening experience, Graham swore he'd never preach again.

But White felt sure Franklin had a gift like his father's and finally persuaded him to preach again in 1989 at an evangelistic Festival in Juneau, Alaska. This time, the people responded. "They packed the place, drunks and prostitutes," said White. "He gave the invitation and they poured down. It was a miracle, and he knew it."

Since then, Franklin has led as many as 5 evangelistic Festivals each year for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA). To date, he has led more than 100 Festivals in locations from Wichita, Kansas, to Sydney, Australia, speaking to more than 3.4 million people. While he preached in his largest Festival to date in Peru, speaking to 207,000 people, Graham is committed to visiting many smaller areas where his father's crusades normally would not go.

"Telling someone else the Good News of Jesus Christ is one of the greatest privileges I know..." - Franklin Graham

"God set me free from the power of sin in my life. He'll do the same for you. He loves you. He'll forgive you. He will set you free." - Franklin Graham

FRANKLIN GRAHAM

Growing Up Graham

"Just being the son of Billy Graham won't get me into heaven." (Franklin Graham, 1996)

William Franklin Graham III, born July 14, 1952, is the fourth of five children of evangelist Billy Graham and his wife, Ruth Bell Graham. Raised in a log home in the Appalachian Mountains outside Asheville, N.C., Franklin now lives in the mountains of Boone, N.C.

At age 22, after a period of rebellion and traveling the world, Franklin committed his life to Jesus Christ while alone in a hotel room in Jerusalem. Soon after, Dr. Bob Pierce, founder of Samaritan's Purse, invited Franklin to join him on a six-week mission to Asia. It was during that time that Franklin felt a calling to work with hurting people in areas of the world affected by war, famine, disease, poverty and natural disaster.

Franklin Graham the International Relief Worker

"I've been called to the slums of the streets and the ditches of the world." (Franklin Graham, 1998)

Franklin was elected to the board of Samaritan's Purse in 1978, and one year later, following the death of Dr. Pierce, he was elected as the president of the organization. Today, he serves as president and CEO of the international relief organization headquartered in Boone, N.C. Samaritan's Purse has an annual budget of $239 million and provides relief and assistance in more than 100 countries worldwide. It has international offices in Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Australia, Austria plus field offices in more than a dozen developing countries.

Franklin Graham the Evangelist

"Evangelistic preaching is what Daddy does, I never thought I would." (Franklin Graham 1995)

Franklin conducted his first evangelistic event in 1989 and committed to spend 10 percent of his time preaching. Each year, he conducts Festivals around the world as an evangelist for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA). Since 1989, he has preached to more than 4 million people in cities from Johannesburg, South Africa to Tupelo, Mississippi. Franklin's 2005 Festival schedule includes events in Hobart, Australia; Melbourne, Australia; Asuncion, Paraguay; Lubango, Angola; Chisinea, Moldova; Corpus Christi, Texas; and Shreveport, La.

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association appointed Franklin Graham CEO in 2000 and president of the organization in 2001. he has served as first vice-chairman of the BGEA since 1995.

Franklin has authored several books, including The Name (Thomas Nelson, 2002), All for Jesus (co-authored with Ross Rhoads, Thomas, Thomas Nelson, 2003), Living Beyond the Limits: A Life Sync with God (Thomas Nelson, 1998), and his autography, Rebel with a Cause: Finally Comfortable Being Graham (Autobiography, Thomas Nelson, 1995).

Franklin and his wife, Jane, live in North Carolina and have four children, Will, Roy, Edward, and Cissie, and three grandchildren.

Franklin Graham partners with local churches in Manila

On September 23, 2004, six Christian leaders representing the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC) in the persons of Bishop Efraim Tendero, Fred Magbanua, Cesar Punzalan and Greg Tingson; Alliance of Baptist Councils (ABC) President Bishop Reuben Abante and IEMELIF Bishop (Retired) George Castro, invited Franklin Graham, son of Dr. Billy Graham and current President and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) to come to Manila to conduct an evangelistic Festival. BGEA is a Christian Organization based in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA. For the past 60 years, BGEA has been known worldwide for its passion for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the ministry of Dr. Billy Graham. This work is complemented by its partnership with Samaritan's Purse, the International Relief Organization of Franklin Graham. He accepted their invitation on December 2, 2004.

Franklin Graham came earlier to Manila on July 11, 2004 to formalize a partnership agreement with the local church leaders. On this trip, he met with several more leaders including Philippines For Jesus Movement (PJM) representative Bishop Leo Alconga, Chairman of Intercessors for the Philippines Bishop Dan Balais, Far East Broadcasting Corporation President Dan Andrew Cura; leaders from the Workplace which included businessman Dr. Andrew Liuson of the Cityland Real Estate Development Corporation, Publisher Emilio Yap of Manila Bulletin; President and General Manager of the Manila Hotel Atty. Joey Lina and PNB Chairman of the Board Flor Tarriela.

The partnership between the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and five major umbrella groups representing the evangelical Gospel-preaching churches composed of the PCEC headed by Bishop Tendero, the National Council of Christian Churches of the Philippines (NCCP) headed by retired Justice of the Supreme Court Raoul Victorino, the umbrella group spearheaded by the Jesus Is Lord (JIL) of Bishop Eduardo Villanueva and a majority of Full Gospel Churches, the Alliance of Baptist Churches (ABC) headed by Bishop Reuben Abante and the Group of Chinese Churches headed by Rev. Jeremiah Cheung, formed a local body called the Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival (MMFGF).

Following the agreement, the newly formed Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival established its office at the 33rd Floor of the Antel Global Bldg. along Julia Vargas Ave. at the Ortigas Center on January 25, 2005.

It was on January 15, 2005 when the MMFGF organized a Task Force to plan and launch a Workplace Conference and the Christian Executives Leadership Seminar on April 15-16, 2005. The inclusion of Workplace workers in the evangelistic ministry marked a paradigm shift in the approach to evangelism, and a first in the BGEA experience. It was a welcome shift in the Philippines especially where transformation of society has become the crying need of the entire nation.

Held at the Makati Shangri-La and chaired by Dr. Andrew Liuson, the Conference drew an attendance of 1,300 while the Leadership Seminar had 1,100 Christian leaders attending. The Conference-Seminar focused on the importance of living out one's faith in the workplace, what it means to be an Ambassador of Christ as a leader and influencer, the elements that define the culture of a high performance organization as well as the valuable lessons learned in ethics and integrity by our local Christian executives. The list of speakers was topped by Don Soderquist, the extraordinary American businessman behind the phenomenal growth of one of the largest companies in the world- the WAL-MART chain, the $43 billion company which grew to $200 billion under his stewardship as senior Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer.

The Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival was assisted by the BGEA Team composed of the following personnel:

Festival Director
Carlos "Bill" Kennedy
Resident Director
Roy Kruse
Ministry Manager for International Training
Robert "Bob" Tanner
Coordinator for Counseling and Follow-Up
James Robert "Bob" Kendig
BGEA Liaison and Correspondence Officer
Annie Kennedy
Resident Director
Chadwick "Chad" Hammond (reassigned to Japan)
BGEA Associate
Adrian Arce (reassigned to Japan)

Recent developments in Asia, however, includes the holding of another Asian Festival on November, 2006 in Okinawa, Japan and two original Team members, Chad Hammond and Adrian Arce, were transferred to Okinawa. Chad Hammond was replaced by Roy Kruse.

The MMFGF Philippine Leadership include the following:

Chairman
Bishop Efraim Tendero
Secretary General
Bishop Reuben Abante
Chief of Staff
Mr. James Tioco
Vice-Chairman for Ministers
Bishop Federico Magbanua
Vice-Chairman for Finance
Ms. Flor Tarriela
Vice-Chairman for Communications
Arch. Dan Andrew Cura
Treasurer
Atty. Josette Abarca
Legal Adviser
Justice Raoul Victorino

Overseeing the entire Asia operations in BGEA veteran Dr. Hendy Holley who was the Crusade Director for Dr. Billy Graham in Manila during the 1977 Crusade in partnership with IEMELIF Bishop George Castro and Rev. Nene Ramientos.

The MMFGF office is manned by staff and volunteers numbering more than one hundred. Starting work as early as January, 2005, the MMFGF personnel manned twelve committees which are integral to the preparations and accomplishment of the February 2-5, 2006 Festival. These committees are : Ministers' (to coordinate the churches), Prayer, Operation Andrew (Adults) Children's - Operation Andy, Youth, Women's - Carriers of Hope, Men - Workplace, Communications, Music (for the 5,000 voice Choir), Physical Arrangement, Ushering and Security.

There are about 3,000 - 4,000 churches all over Metro Manila and the surrounding areas of the CALABARZON and CAMANAVA including some churches in the Bulacan Province. To date, more than 50% of the targeted churches have already come on board. More so, with the participation of the Philippines For Jesus Movement - JIL, the Quirino Grandstand-Rizal Park area is expected to overflow with those who will respond to answer God's call to the transforming power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

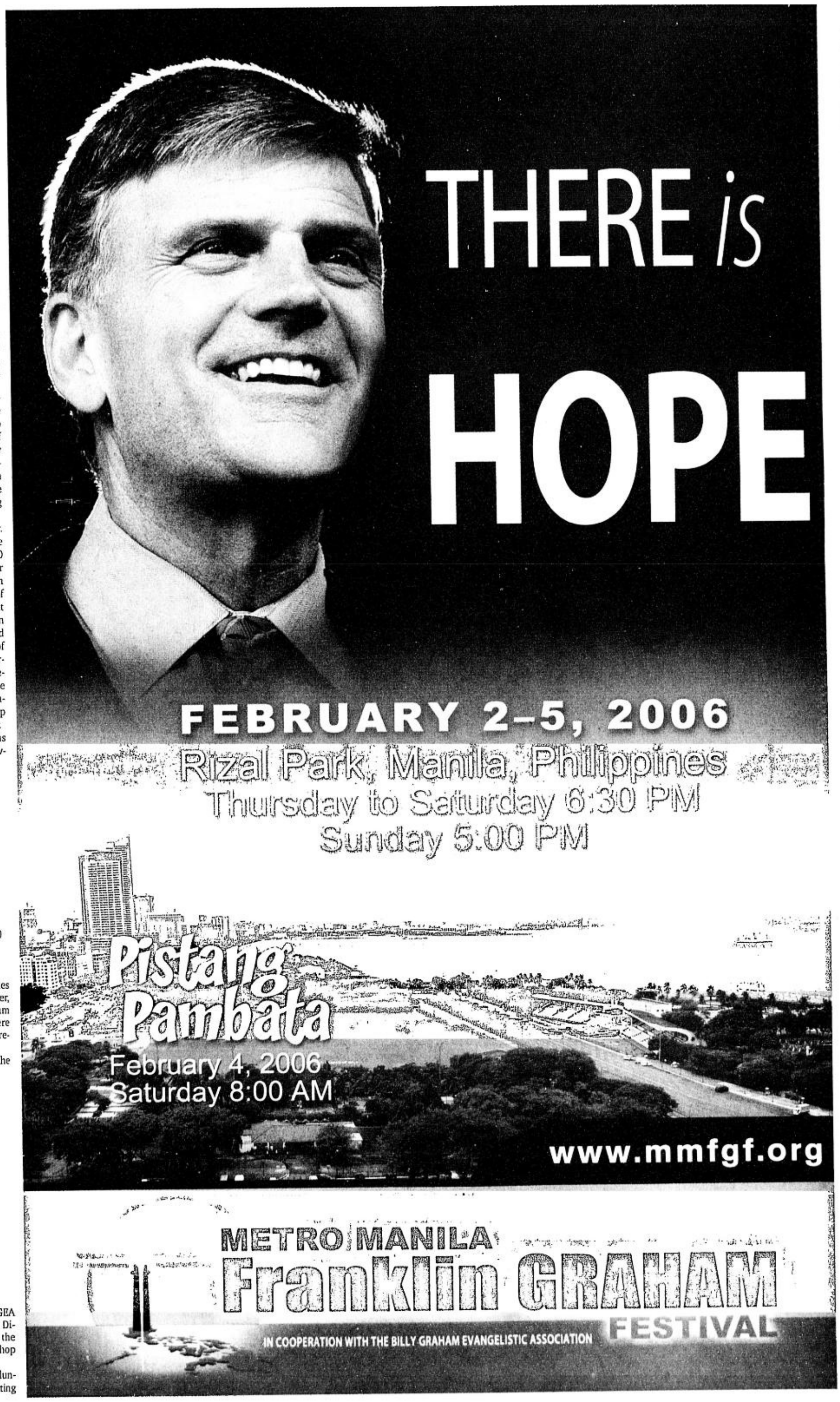
The evangelization of children is one of the priorities of MMFGF. Considering the children, ages 7-14, which is very much evident in Metro Manila, a PISTANG PAMBATA or Children's Festival will be held on February 4 at 8:00am. As a result of the MMFGF's "Operation Andy" campaign (enlisting 3 names of friends and loved ones), around 100,000 children will be expected to attend.

With the Philippine Christian churches joined together in unity, the Metro Manila Franklin Graham Festival can expect the fulfillment of its objective to gather "the greatest number of Filipinos to hear the gospel and be invited to respond, to be discipled and integrated in the local church to worship and serve the Lord" at the Rizal Park on February 2-5, 2006.

For the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, it will be Franklin's first evangelistic outreach in Asia; significantly, Metro Manila will be the very first to hear Franklin Graham's message that THERE IS HOPE in Jesus Christ.

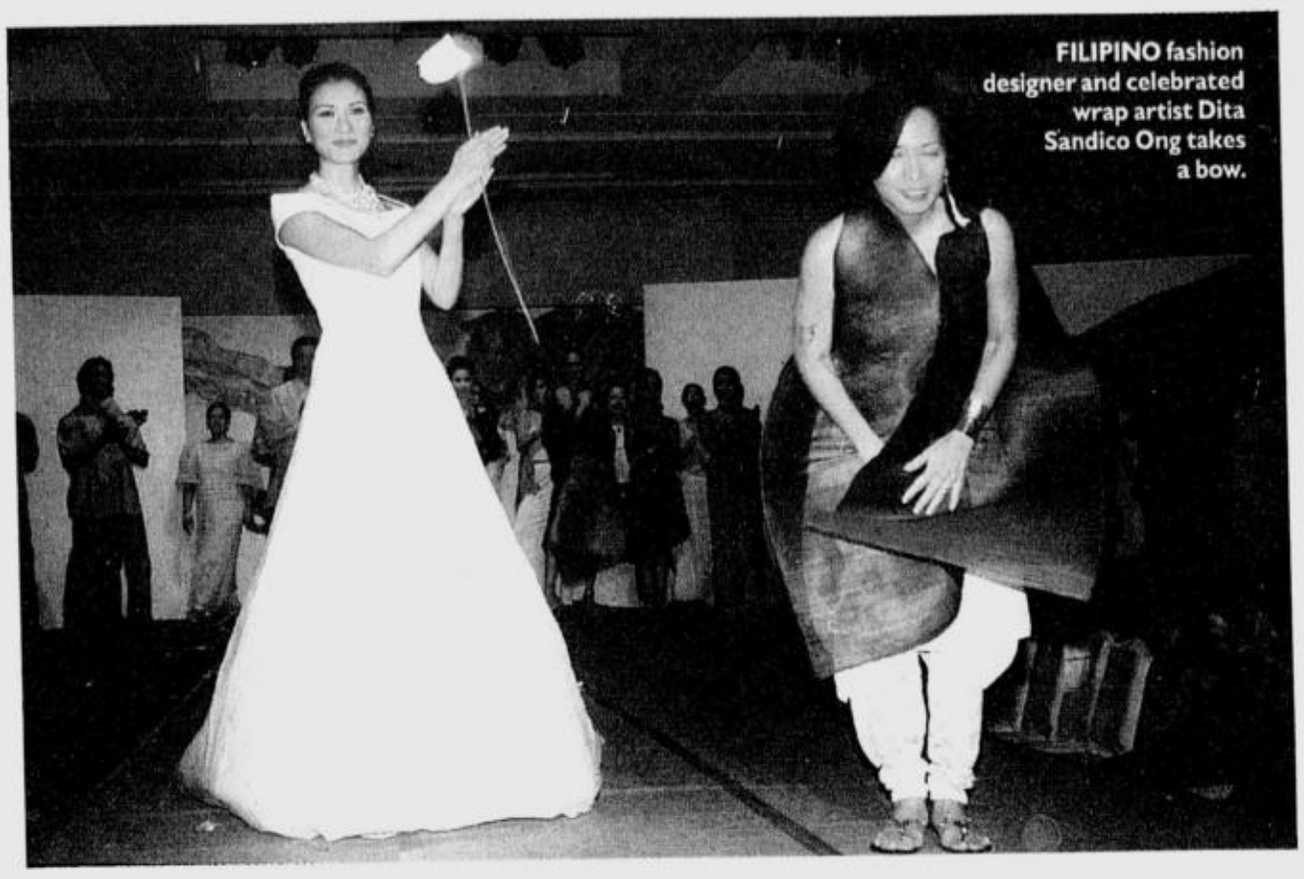
BIOGRAPHY OF FRANKLIN GRAHAM

Born on July 14, 1952, to parents Billy and Ruth Bell Graham, Franklin Graham is married to Jane Austin Cunningham Graham (1974). Their children are: William Franklin "Will" Graham IV (1975), Roy Austin Graham (1977), Edward Bell Graham (1979), Jane Austin "Cissie" Graham (1986). He is blessed with three grandchildren. He attained his education at Montreat College, (A.S.), 1974; and Appalachian State University, (B.A.), 1978. He was ordained at the Grace Community Church, Tempe, Ariz., 1982. Ministries include: President and CEO, Samaritan's Purse (international relief organization); President and CEO, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association; Evangelist (1989 - present), Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. He is one of the Board of Directors of the Samaritan's Purse, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Harvest Christian Fellowship. Authored books such as: All for Jesus (co-authored with Ross Rhoads, Thomas, Thomas Nelson, 2003); Kids Praying for Kids (Thomas Nelson, 2003); The Name (Thomas Nelson, 2002); Living Beyond the Limits: A Life Sync with God (Thomas Nelson, 1998); Rebel with a Cause: Finally Comfortable Being Graham (Autobiography, Thomas Nelson, 1995); Miracle in a Shoe Box (Thomas Nelson, 1995); Bob Pierce: This One Thing I Do (Word, 1983). He received such honors as: William Booth Award, presented by the Salvation Army; Whitworth College, honorary doctorate; Toccoa Falls College, honorary doctorate; LeTourneau University, honorary doctorate; Lees McRae College, honorary doctorate; National University, honorary doctorate; Liberty University, honorary doctorate; 1999 "Tar Heel of the Year" by The News & Observer (Raleigh, N.C.); 2002 " Daniel of the Year" by World magazine.



SABRINA Wong in elegant black inner gown with turquoise *lukot* wrap

FIRST Lady of Guam Joanna Camacho in red inner gown with *lukot* wrap



FILIPINO fashion designer and celebrated wrap artist Dita Sandico Ong takes a bow.

Wrapping up in Guam

From page D1

hand-painted Irish linen tops that were perfect for Guam's cool and breezy weather.

The modern Filipiniana collection presented designs in classic piña, Irish linen and abaca, in hues of ecru, off-white and beige. The models sashayed in *kimonas*, *panuelos* and barongs that were cut and altered for modern fashionistas.

The DSO-OMO Men's line came in cool colors of aqua, turquoise, apple green and bubble-gum blue, with a touch of Filipino pride in its use of the ancient *alibata* and Mangyan weaves as accents.

Sandico-Ong also unveiled her latest Lukot Collection. Using her trademark banana-fiber wraps, she has added a process of crumpling the fabrics to give more texture.

Guam First Lady Joanne Camacho stepped out in a stunning red gown with a Lukot wrap in deep purple, escorted by her son Champ Camacho and daughter Maria Camacho.

The finale featured a flowing Irish linen wedding gown with a gold hand-beaded bodice and a hand-embroidered veil on a Maria Clara-like bride. The groom was in tapered black slacks and a classic *piña* barong.

Part of the proceeds were earmarked for Sandico-Ong's Earthlite Foundation, the American Red Cross and the Guam Hope Foundation, which is committed to the health and education of indigent children.

The fashion show was directed by Raymond Villanueva and jointly produced by the Pangasinan Ladies Club of Guam and host Alfredo Antolin. Fashion stylists and executive assistants Tanya Lim Llana and Sara Morales assisted Sandico-Ong. Stage design and overall production were by Nathan De Leon, Hermi Estialbo, Dan De Los Santos and Antonio Salac Santos.

Among the professional models from the Philippines were JP Abinuman, Ava Abejar, Herbi Arabelo and Rafael Kieffer. They were joined by Guam-based Sabrina Mabanta Wong.

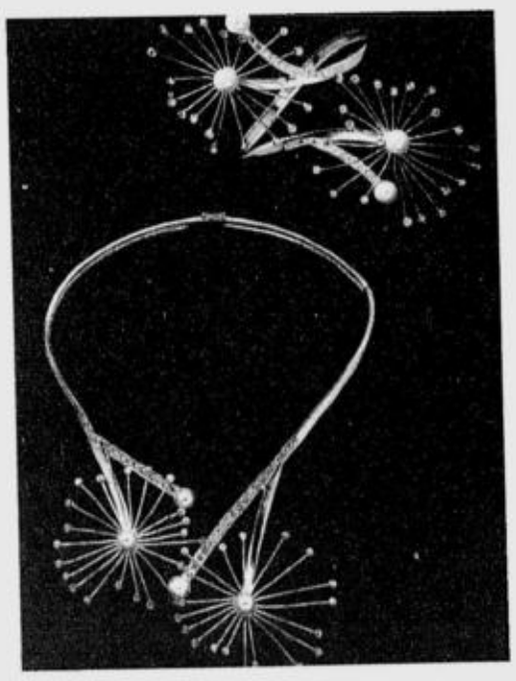
Best-designed local jewelry

THE BEST JEWELRY DESIGNS WERE GIVEN recognition at the recent 5th Philippine Fine Jewelry Design Competition held at the Metro Comedy Bar in Quezon City.

The competition is an annual event organized by the Meycauayan Jewelry Industry Association Inc., in partnership with the Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines (Design Center). It aims to promote excellence in the design and craftsmanship of Philippine jewelry.

Winners were chosen from among 225 entries submitted by professional designers and students from the University of the Philippines-Diliman, Mapua Institute of Technology, University of Santo Tomas (UST), University of the East and Philippine Women's University.

"Fireworks," the winning piece, is made up of two exquisite pieces that entice the eye of the viewer with the meticulous arrangement of diamonds and pearls, suggesting a panorama of light and movement.



When the jewels reflect light, a graceful dance of color is produced, bringing out the fireworks effect. Set in 14k white gold, the jewels are fit for a dressy evening.

This piece of jewelry won in the Provincial Design Image of Bulacan category, which required entries to speak of or identify the province's historical, cultural, spiritual, economic and social heritage.

UST student Ghia Angela P. Tagle also designed a winning piece whose prototype was sponsored by Zuniga Jewelry.

Since its establishment in 1973, the Design Center has continuously organized activities aimed at cultivating a better appreciation and understanding of design, both as a business tool and as a way of life. Call the 8321112 to 18.

A CELEBRATION OF Love FROM THE SHANG!

Enjoy a showcase of musical attractions and cultural festivities in celebration of the love month at the Shang!

Special treats and surprises await you and your loved ones at participating outlets mallwide!

FEBRUARY 4, Saturday
"Ani ng Sining" Dance Performances
National Commission for Culture and The Arts
5pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

Toni Blackman Hip Hop Ensemble
7-9pm, Streetscape

DJ Patch and Levi's Engineered Jeans Dancers
9:30pm, Streetscape

FEBRUARY 11, Saturday
San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra with San Miguel Master Chorale
6pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

FEBRUARY 14, Tuesday
"That Lovin' Feelin"
May Bayot and Butch Montejo
6pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

FEBRUARY 15-21
EIGA SAI 2006
Cinema 3, Shang Cineplex, Level 6

FEBRUARY 17, Friday
"A Love Affair"
Featuring Angelo Ortiz with Jed Madela as special guest
6pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

FEBRUARY 18, Saturday
Nihongo Fiesta (Japan Foundation)
10am-5pm, Cinema 3, Shang Cineplex, Level 6

FEBRUARY 24 to 26
Ikebana Exhibit and Demonstration
Mall Hours, Grand Atrium, Level 2

FEBRUARY 24 to MARCH 4
Lifescapes and Landscapes of Japan: A Photo Exhibition
Mall Hours, Level 3, in front of Figaro Exhibit Area

FEBRUARY 24 to MARCH 17
J Pop Showcase
Mall Hours, Shaw Hallway, Level 4

STREETSCAPE SHOWS: 9:30pm

Feb. 3 - Amadeus
Feb. 4, 7pm - Toni Blackman Hip Hop Ensemble, DJ Patch and Levi's Engineered Jeans Dancers
Feb. 10 - Liquified Orange
Feb. 11 - Retrospect
Feb. 17 - 8 Track
Feb. 18 - Prime Council
Feb. 24 - Sunburn
Feb. 25 - Core of Soul with Barbie Almalbis, Kitchie Nadal and Hale

Shangri-La Plaza

DREAMS CAN COME TRUE
Maidenform uncovers a dream that women has coveted for years

Dreams-a unique and mystical activity of the human psyche. It is a subconscious desire for the best things that this world can offer. Dream job, dream house, dream man, even a dream bra! Do dreams come true? Yes, at least, one of them does. For women who had dreamed of better support, comfort and style for their bras, Maidenform introduces the *Dream Bra* - the first bra tailored to fit, feel and be worn like a dream!

The Maidenform *Dream Bra* is the culmination of a two-year quest to design the ultimate bra in which every woman feels comfortable, confident and looks her best. And because Maidenform knows dreams come in all shapes and sizes, the *Dream Bra* is available in sizes 32A to 40D to ensure that each one provides the most comfortable, personalized, figure-flattering shape and lift. As the sizes go up, the construction of the bra adjusts to deliver the right coverage and support specific to the size of the wearer, while maintaining the same silhouette. For instance, larger sizes have wider straps to provide better support. The width of the hook and eye is also proportional to the band size for added comfort. Its sweetheart neckline graduates to convertible comfort straps that can be worn as conventional underwire or criss-cross style. It also has a hidden, patented flip-resistant wire for a seamless effect and feminine curvaceous shape. The clean, contemporary design provides a smooth look and is ultra soft because no elastic is exposed to the skin.

The *Dream Bra*, like so many of the perfect things women dream about, combines all the things they want - but didn't know they could have. It anticipates women's needs in key areas such as comfort, fit and everyday wearability that gives women a flawless look under their clothes.

Studies have revealed that many women are uncomfortable in their bras and are looking for good support and lift. They also want a bra that makes them feel secure and with ample fabric so that they are properly covered even when wearing thin tops. A bra's durability is also highly important to women because they want it to last through many washings.

Maidenform's design team took a holistic approach to re-thinking every component of a bra, paying particular attention to those concerns that paved the way for the creation of the *Dream Bra*. It is the newest addition to the company's rich history of bra innovations that has spanned nearly 100 years.

The *Dream Bra* is available in body beige, black, white, pink nectar and dream blue in all leading department stores nationwide. Maidenform is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation.

ADVT.

Maternity fashion lays golden Egg

A New Zealand brand comes to birth-prone Philippines to make moms fashionably on the way

By Cheche V. Moral

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: reversible two-piece swimsuit, P8,040. Cross wrap, P4,960, and linen pants, P4,980. Silky top, P5,940. Cream button skirt, P5,900

WHEN CHARLOTTE Devereux, 35, got pregnant with her first child in 2001, she found herself in the same predicament as perhaps every fashionable, new mom-to-be: She had nothing nice to wear!

Devereux said her pre-pregnancy clothes had gotten too tight for her growing belly, yet she was still too small for typical maternity clothing. However, the choices available in her native New Zealand left much to be desired.

Devereux was distraught. There is no worse way to make a pregnant woman feel un-sexy, after all, than by concealing her swollen midsection under frumpy clothing.

Like a kangaroo

"I tried on this pair of pants with a pouch on the belly, and I looked like a kangaroo!" she recalled with a laugh.

"We got some giggles from that one," joined in her mom, Colyn Devereux-Kay.

Not long after, the creative daughter and her enterprising mom would hatch, well, Egg (for Essentials for Growing Girls), a clothing line that covers all stages of a woman's pregnancy.

Devereux, who attended both art and finance schools, designs for Egg; her mom, a businesswoman, runs it. Devereux later enjoyed wearing her stylish designs while heavy with her now 18-month-old second child.

"When you're pregnant you want comfort but you want to still look really good," noted Devereux-Kay. She and her daughter met with the local press recently to prepare for the launch of Egg's two boutiques. One is at Glorietta 4, in Makati, and the other, at the Mall of Asia in Pasay, which opens in March.

Devereux-Kay says her generation was lucky that, when she got pregnant with her son and daughter, trapeze-style dresses popularized by the model Twiggy were in vogue. "I never had the same problem as Charlotte's," she beamed.

Their own models

Even then, the slim grandma proudly wears Egg's clothing today, including a black empire-cut blouse with mesh cap sleeves for this interview. She swears by the clothes' comfort, especially for long-haul flights. And there's no guessing she's in maternity wear.

Her daughter, who isn't pregnant, was also wearing a black empire dress with hanky hemline.

The woman who brought Egg to Manila was also in a black top and tan jacket from Egg's S/S 2006 collection. A mother of one, Rachel Joaquin-Madrid said she and husband Martin plan to have more kids "and I want to make sure I'm dressed well." She added that she always got queries about her clothes when she was pregnant, and she would always say she got them abroad.

The Madrids' company, Tradewind Imports and Distribution Inc., owns Egg's Philippine franchise. "We chose to bring in Egg because it has an all-range collection, from everyday wear to corporate and dressier occasions," the young mom explains.

High birth rate

The Devereuxs put up their first store in Auckland only three years ago, and now have 17 boutiques across New Zealand and Australia. It was named seventh fastest growing company in New Zealand last year.

In spite of offers to set up shop in different countries, they decided to take on the Philippines first because of the high birth rate here (about two million in 2004, according to Martin Madrid).

Owing to its mid-high price point (tees will sell from P2,000-up; jeans P5,000-up; dresses P7,000-up), Egg's target market is only the Top 5 percent—still over three times higher than their entire New Zealand market, which has a 30,000 annual birth rate.

Devereux-Kay said she knew Egg would fit

MATERNITY/ E3

ANGEL aqua dress, P7,600. Striped bandeau top, P4,460

CHARLOTTE Devereux, Rachel Joaquin-Madrid, Martin O. Madrid, Colyn Devereux-Kay

why it's a dream

personalized fit
designed size by size, from A thru D

signature stretch-to-fit comfort
cups for superior shaping

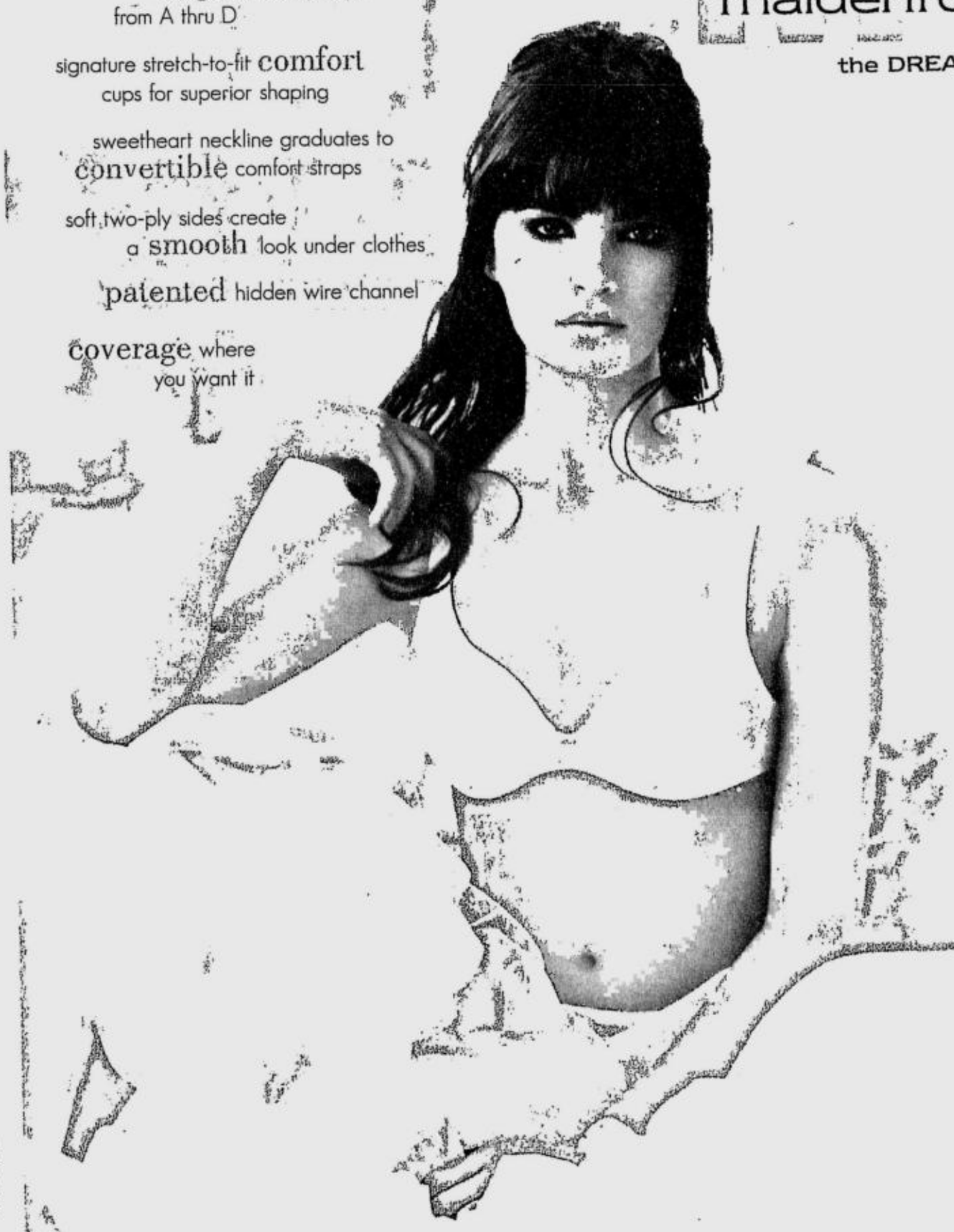
sweetheart neckline graduates to
convertible comfort straps

soft two-ply sides create
a smooth look under clothes

patented hidden wire channel

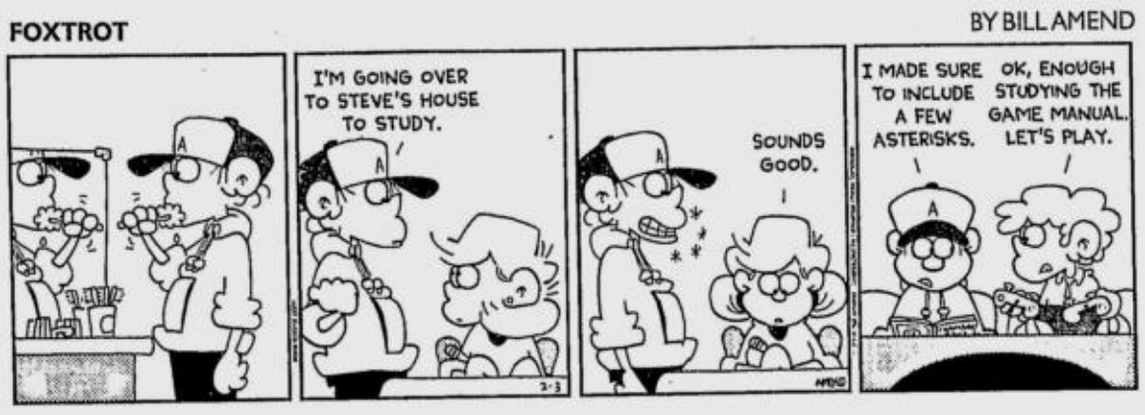
coverage where
you want it

introducing
maidenform®
the DREAM® bra



Available at all leading department stores nationwide
Exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation / Tel. 890-9703

FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND



A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA

MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a perfectionist. You have high standards for yourself and others. Many of you become technically proficient at something. You value the simple pleasures in life. (You're not pretentious.) Work hard this year, because your rewards will arrive very soon. Don't worry if you feel overwhelmed with everything—you can do this!

Birthdate of: Norman Rockwell, painter; Blythe Danner, actress; Fran Tarkenton, footballer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Relations with bosses and parents will improve now. Things that seemed to be going backward now start to come into focus again. What a relief!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Once again, matters connected with publishing, travel, foreign countries, the media and education looked feasible. Now you can go forward with your plans. The delays are over.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Those of you who waited for estates to be settled, inheritances to be cleared and red-tape delays to be resolved can now breathe a sigh of relief. It's all systems go.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Confusion with partnerships will now clear up. For the last two to three weeks, things were fuzzy, but everything is getting clearer now.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Payment for work done several weeks ago will come through now. How sweet it is! A number of delays regarding your job are now a thing of the past. (Whew!)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Romance has been sort of stuck for you for a while. Now the brakes are off. Things will move forward much more smoothly in this area. Whoopee!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You've wanted to get some lovely things for your home or for family members. Now this dream can become a reality. It pleases you to be able to do this.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're feeling better and better about your everyday dealings with daily contacts. You see now just how much love there is in your daily life. This is reassuring.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): There's no question you're a planner. You're a visionary! It looks like some of your plans are finally going to make money. Of course, you knew they would. (Ever the optimist.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Relations with partners, and practically everyone for that matter, start to improve now in a sweet, tender way. Life is becoming a mutual-admiration society!

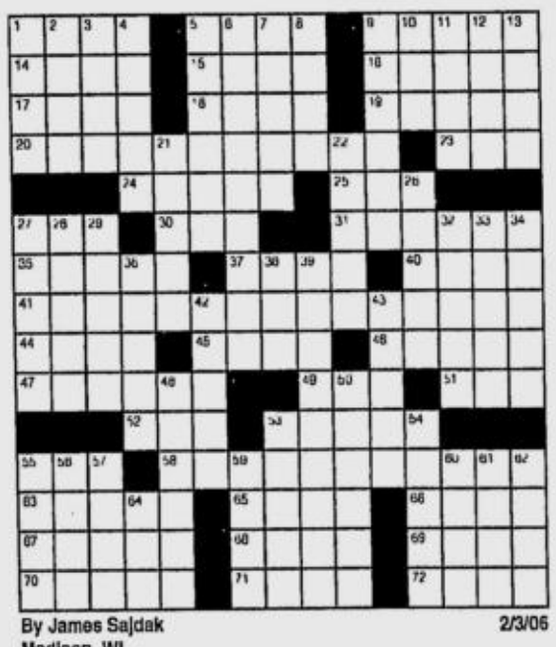
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Many of you are becoming more in touch with your spiritual side. (I think it's on your left, above the third rib.) Don't be afraid to explore this. There's always more to life than there appears.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your friendship with someone takes a lovely turn for the better today. This is so encouraging. Friends are few, but they're important. A friend is someone who knows what's going on in your life.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Bikini bomb
5 "Dear" advice-giver
9 Type size
14 Island near Java
15 Caribou hunting tribe
16 Element 54
17 Checkup
18 House of cookies?
19 African river
20 Coyote bio?
23 Crisis letters
24 Ultraviolet filter
25 Very small
27 Loc.
30 Wall St. wheeler-dealer
31 Having the least to do
35 Daisy relative
37 First garden
40 Sal's canal
41 Beater control?
44 Fast period
45 Q.E.D. word
46 Better to be with
47 Shiny fabric
49 Local pol.
51 Hughes' airline
52 McMahon and Ames
53 Secret agents
55 Marx follower?
58 Choice of surnames?
63 Cousteau invention
65 Whole-grain component
66 Strongly assert
67 Subsequently
68 Small rodents
69 Pre-Euro currency
70 Correct
71 Satirist Mort
72 Vortex

DOWN
1 Genesis shepherd
2 Metered vehicle
3 Patron saint of Norway
4 Outmoded copier, briefly
5 Be an agent of
6 Kodiak or grizzly
7 Contradict
8 Whoop
9 Surpass
10 Seinfeld's uncle
11 Holiday chain?
12 African nation
13 Son of Seth
21 Alabama city
22 Adlai's middle name
26 Oily resin
27 Ratchet latches
28 Milo of "The Verdict"
29 Work period
32 Upright
33 Tendon
34 Aquarium neon
36 __ Lauder
38 Genetic matter, briefly
39 Allman Brothers album
42 One with character
43 Winning hit, e.g.
48 Playwright Albee
50 Big name in little trains
53 Glacially produced grooves
54 Marshy lowland
55 Skye or Wight
56 Con game
57 Remote button
59 Some PC's
60 Roman poet
61 Uncool kid
62 Novelist Zane
64 Cross or Blue



By James Sajdak
Madison, WI
2/3/06

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

S	K	I	M		B	A	R	B	S		L	E	E	S
A	N	N	E		A	L	E	R	T		I	N	K	Y
R	I	M	E		N	A	D	I	A		E	D	E	N
I	F	A	T	F	I	R	S	T	Y	O	U			
S	E	N	S	E	S			S	E	X		S	P	A
				E	T	T	A		D	I	N	E	R	O
A	K	I	N		E	R	R	S		D	O	T	E	R
D	O	N	O	T	R	E	C	E	D	E	D	I	E	T
O	R	A	T	E		Y	E	A	R		E	N	N	A
B	A	N	A	N	A		D	R	A	B				
E	N	E		O	D	A			F	R	A	N	C	E
			A	N	D	D	I	E	T	A	G	A	I	N
A	G	O	G		L	O	R	R	E		R	I	D	E
L	U	R	E		E	R	A	S	E		E	V	E	R
E	Y	E	D		D	E	N	T	S		E	E	R	O

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2/3/06

OFF-WHITE, V-neck quarter-sleeve shrug with embroidery at the back and denim Tasha pants. Carnation-pink top with belt and dainty floral skirt

Shapely Orientalia

JAPANESE-INSPIRED FLORAL prints and wraparounds highlight the Orientalia Collection of For Me, the brand specially designed to suit the four body shapes of women.

Your figure may be an hourglass, or a triangle with shapely hips, a straight-looking rectangle like that of Naomi or Kate Moss, or an inverted triangle. Whatever your shape is, you can definitely look sexy with the right fit and style details.

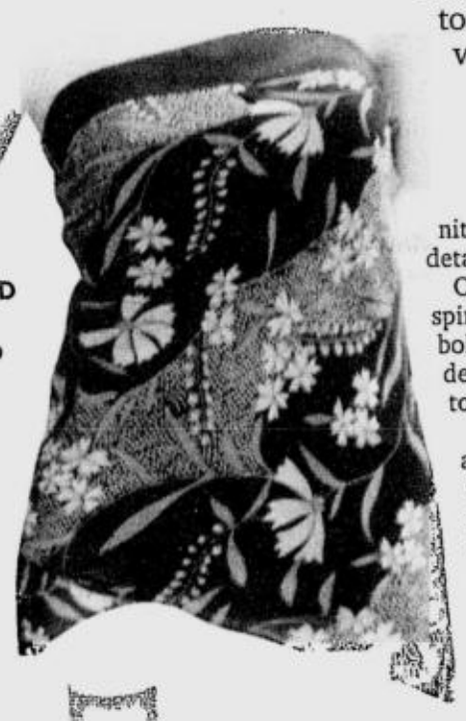
Orientalia is expressed in kimono-inspired wraps mixed with fashionable boleros and shrugs. Dainty floral prints and delicate embroidery provide a feminine touch to the collection.

An off-white quarter-sleeve shrug with a deep-V tie neckline helps make a heavy upper body look narrow. The embroidery at the back that cascades from the hem makes it more interesting. The basil green shrug with a shirred chest area helps achieve a busty look, while a tie-around hem that wraps your torso provides a slimming effect on the waist.

A carnation pink top with fold down open-knit collar breaks the width of a heavy bosom to balance the look of an inverted triangle figure. It has a removable belt that accentuates the waistline. This would look great paired with a printed A-line dainty floral skirt made with microfiber twill or a nice-fitting Tasha jeans.

A sexy printed brown tube top flows elegantly on the hourglass figure, with the asymmetric hemline giving the illusion of wide hips. A casual boat-neck top with diagonal print on the body broadens the shoulder of the rectangle figure to give a more sexy silhouette.

For Me stores are in SM North Edsa, SM Megamall, Robinsons Galleria, The Shops Greenhills, Alimall, SM San Lazaro, Market! Market!, Festival Mall, SM Southmall, SM Sucat, SM Dasmariñas, SM Bacoor, SM Lucena, SM Pampanga, CS! Lucao and Ayala Cebu.



PRINTED brown tube top

BASIL-GREEN shrug

Maternity fashion lays golden egg

From page E1

the Filipino sensibility well. "I've been here a few times for other business. You have fantastic malls, you love to shop, and Filipino women are very stylish," she noted.

Egg has scaled down its sizing to include XX-small for the petite Filipina (the biggest size is XX-large). Its catalog says the range is "designed to take you from the first to the ninth month of birth and afterward." One skirt-dress style, in fact, can be worn five ways, three of which as a sexy dress even long after losing the baby weight.

Two collections

Egg comes out with two collections each year. Its mainstays consist of basics (Essentials) that can be mixed or matched. These include underwear, tank tops, short- and long-sleeved tees and tops, pants, skirts, jeans, suit jacket, swimsuit—all in solid neutrals.

While her collections include several printed materials, Devereux prefers solid colors, mixing fabrics instead to add texture to her designs. "Prints make pregnant women look bigger," she explains.

Apart from work wear, Egg also has the Designer range, which consists of dressy day-to-evening pieces.

In line with its expansion in the tropics, the label also launched a line called Egg for All Seasons. It makes use of "transitional fabrics," mostly cottons with Spandex or Lycra, flexible garments suited for summer to winter, or, in the Philippines' case, air-conditioned indoors. (Egg uses New Zealand's famed merino wool for winterwear, but Devereux-Kay concedes it may be too much for the tropical climate.) The waistbands of pants and skirts either have thick elastic bands or side zips with adjustable D-rings.

With Egg, future moms have something to look forward to besides the baby.

WeRoam Now Unwiring

at Your Neighborhood PC Store

PLDT WeRoam , the wireless innovation that gives you full-time mobile internet connectivity has not only been winning awards, but is also moving into your neighborhood PC stores.

You can now sign up for PLDT WeRoam at the PC stores you know best. Just visit any participating HP or ThinkPad PC shop - Accent Micro/ PC Live, Complink/E-Hub, Electroworld, HP Home & Business Center, HP Store (DLSU-Taft), The Computer Authority, Villman, Silicon Valley, and Ng Khai Cebu.

And it just gets better. You can get the wireless GPRS/EDGE card equipped with 3 months unlimited WeRoam (GPRS/EDGE and WiFi Internet) for as low as P12,600 or at 0% interest plan of P1,050 per month for 12 months in major credit cards. Also available in 0% plans are the latest HP and ThinkPad laptops that are equipped with PLDT WeRoam.

Hook up your laptop to the PLDT WeRoam experience and get yourself full-time Internet access anywhere you are thru PLDT's vast GPRS, EDGE and WiFi wireless network.

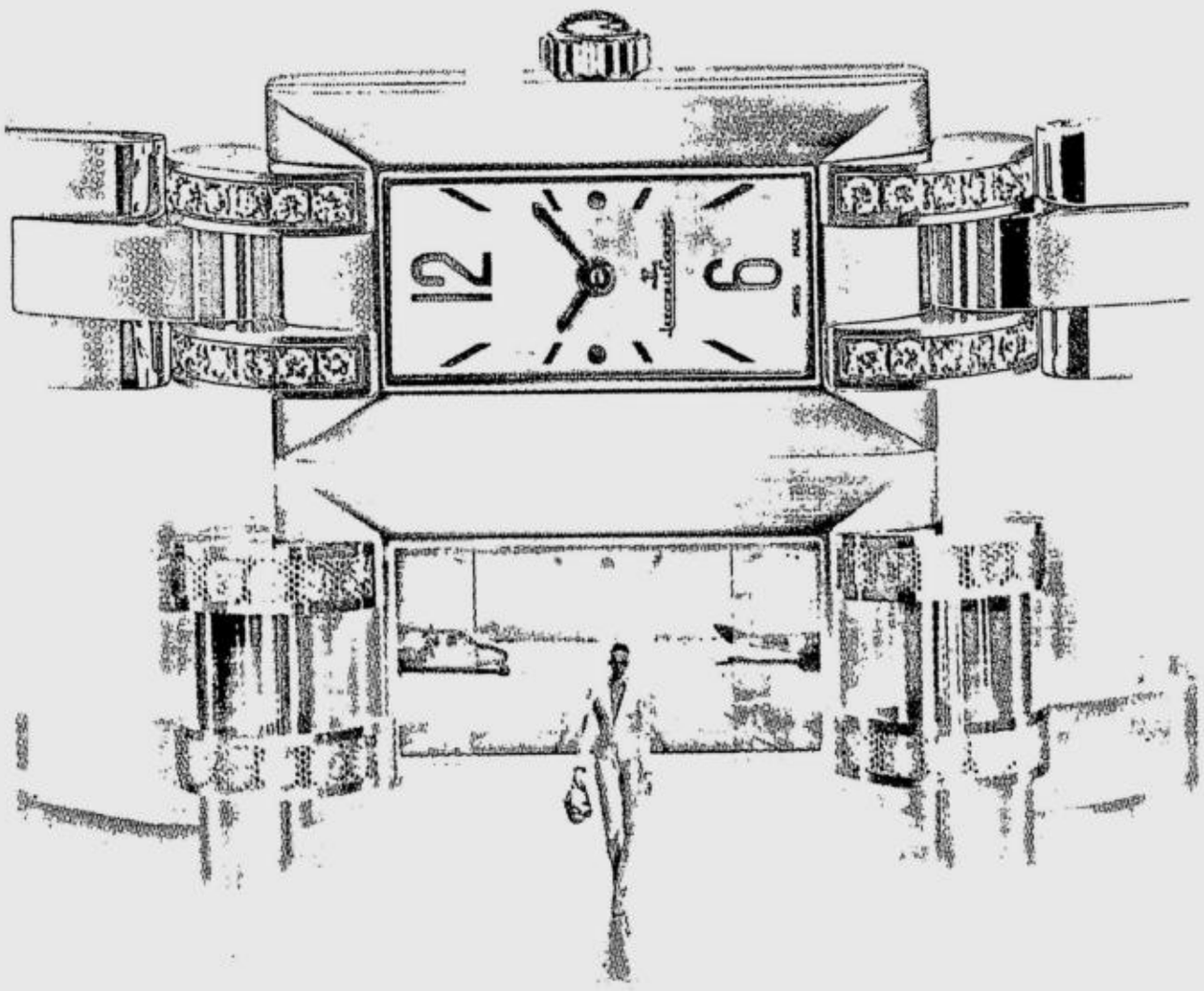
"This is the fulfillment of our promise to provide a wireless connectivity service to transients in the country as well as students and prospective users who have laptops but are not frequent users of wireless broadband service, and therefore do not need to subscribe to a postpaid service. We developed this package to suit this specific need." said Ernesto R. Alberto, SVP for the Corporate Business Group.

Now it's easier for you to get yourself real freedom.

Techies and businesses have been raving about PLDT WeRoam, and with good reason. More and more people are reading and seeing about it in gadget magazines and exhibits. Now is the time to experience PLDT WeRoam for yourself.

For more information, log on to www.pldtweroam.com or email bizsol@pldt.com.ph or call 874-7474.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE



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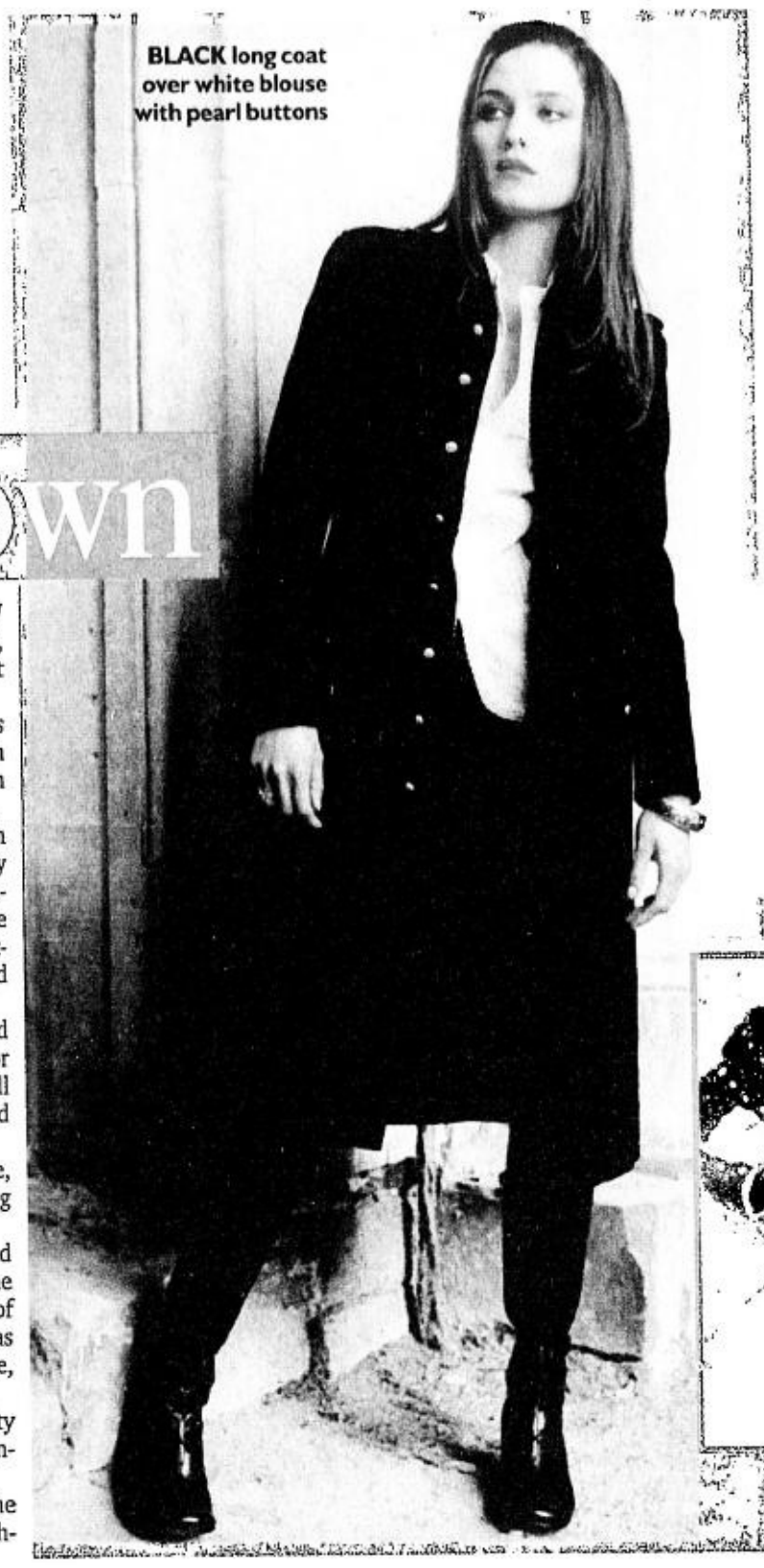
www.lucernejewelers.com

Another UK fashion brand fills stylish space at Shangri-La Plaza mall and it's called Wallis

LEATHER bag with tassel

Brit chic hits town



BLACK long coat over white blouse with pearl buttons

BROWN fur gilet over white eyelet blouse and jeans

BLUE empire V-front dress

FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM NOW comes high-end fashion brand Wallis, which opened its first Asian boutique at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall recently.

Wallis is a much sought-after name for its elegant, grownup, individual styles for urban women. Its lines are perfect for career-driven fashion-forward Filipinas 25-49 years of age.

The casual wear selection includes picks in neutral browns and khakis brightened by shades of lime, coral and indigo. There are safari-style or military-inspired jackets, belt-tie waists, cropped trousers and tailored waistcoats in vibrant colors and nature-inspired prints and embellishments.

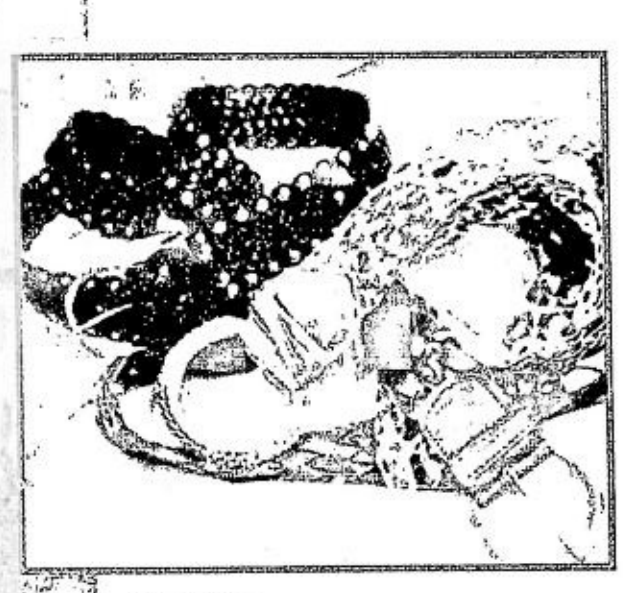
A vintage-inspired collection is exemplified by godet and raw-edged skirts and ruffle or knitwear trim blouses in soft colors like shell and rose pink, mink, latte or cream, accented with sea green, mauve and subtle metallics.

Accessories include metallic beaded purse, leather sash belts and embellished evening bags.

Wallis is the biggest women's fashion brand currently under the Arcadia Group Plc, the largest clothing retailer in UK and owners of Topshop, Topman and Dorothy Perkins. It has 136 stores and 150 concessions in UK alone, and has 103 stores all over the world.

In the Philippines, Robinsons Specialty Stores Inc. (RSSI) holds the exclusive franchise to Wallis.

Wallis is at 3/F, Indulgences Wing of the Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Visit www.wallis-fashion.co.uk



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Customer Service Hotline: Tel.: 884-15-17 *Email: customerservice@wacoal.ph

DAVINES Mask Hair Color System brings out Angel Jacob's pretty *mestiza* features.

Angel's mane secret

"YOUR HAIR IS THE FIRST thing that people see," says Angel Jacob. "Even if you don't wear any makeup, healthy and lustrous hair will make you stand out."

Famed hair and beauty expert Henri Calayag of H salon agrees: "Customizing a look to a woman's lifestyle is key. Bringing out her inner beauty is the task of a stylist, and it will show if she's confident and comfortable in the style she sports."

For Angel, days are packed with various hosting engagements and fashion editorials, not to mention spending quality time with her 12-year-old daughter.

Angel maintains a fuss-free look to suit her busy lifestyle. To bring out her pretty *mestiza* features, Calayag reveals Angel's secret to beautiful tresses: Angel religiously colors her hair every four to six months. The Davines Mask Hair Color System is heaven-sent for her.

"It's made with all-natural ingredients, giving my hair a shine and color boost. It's gentle on my scalp—and it smells good, too!"

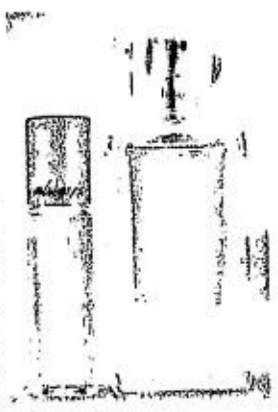
Calayag has been using Davines for many years now and for friends like Angel Jacob, he uses nothing else but Davines.

"Get moisturizing treatments regularly. And for daily care, use cleansing and conditioning agents that are recommended for colored hair," he says.

Formulated by the Davines Italian research and development teams, the Davines Mask Hair Color system comes with a unique, all-natural milk protein base, giving enhanced color durability, optimum conditioning, and lustrous shine.

For more information, call 6871156 or 6870424.

Always a vibrant scent



AVON'S Always

AVON'S THIRD fragrance in the Today.Tomorrow.Always trilogy evokes the spirit of a vibrant, lush garden. Its fruity and floral scent bursts with sparkling starfruit and evolves into heavenly blossoms of dewy yellow tulip. The Always fragrance features the everlasting flower, whose enduring blooms symbolize eternity.

With Today.Tomorrow.Always, Avon's trilogy of love is complete. The trilogy is proudly endorsed by Avon global spokesperson and Oscar-nominated actress Salma Hayek.

Today.Tomorrow.Always by Avon is now available from Avon Ladies and at Avon Boutiques in Glorietta, SM Megamall, SM Southmall and SM City Fairview.

As a special introductory offer, get a free gold handbag for every purchase of Today, Tomorrow or Always Eau de Parfum 50 ml. In addition, get a gold wristlet for every purchase of Today, Tomorrow or Always Purse Concentre 9 ml. Promo runs until Feb. 28.

LIFE & STYLE

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BEAUTY

Getting gorgeous

Knowing what look works best for you means buying the makeup that will be of best use to you

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

WHEN I'M IN THE MALL checking out new products, I have a grand time educating myself. Things turn serious the minute I decide I must have a particular beauty item.

Of course, in order to really get to know the product and find out if it's worth writing about, a road test of sorts is required.

From a consumer's point of view, I suggest you pick what you think will be of most use. For it to be worth the amount of money you're going to shell out, you should be able to use it at least once a week. Also the more versatile the better. A multipurpose product you can use for day or night is ideal.

It's also important to remember that makeup has a shelf life. It is not an investment, in the strictest sense of the word, although it may get you places, a new job or, with God's good graces, a new hot boyfriend. So, pick your beauty arsenal well.

Some are worth the price, like Lancôme's juicy tube, but others are really just an extravagance. If you have the cash, good for you. Unfortunately, not everybody is as blessed so choose wisely.

Another way to determine which products you need is by working with the look that works best for you. The amount of compliments you get when sporting a particular look is probably a good gauge. And if you have an asset that you want people to focus on, that's what you should play up. If you have great skin, for instance, the sheer, luminous look would be great on you. Meanwhile, girls with great lips a la Angelina Jolie should have a good selection of lipsticks, including the smashing, diva-ish red-hot number.

Check out Avon for lip shades that give you real value for you hard-earned bucks. They have an array of fun colors that spread well.

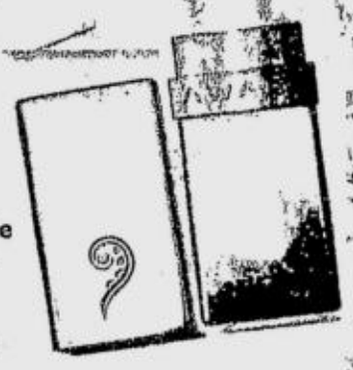
When you are aware of which feature you should play up, then focus on the makeup product you need to do just that. Shopping gets easier, and you bring home products that will be of better use to you.

Let's learn from the beauty experts themselves. Professional makeup artists always just play up one feature, so determine yours and create the right balance and blending—these are the real secrets to great makeup.

ENHANCE beautiful skin with liquid foundation. It will add glow and luminosity, and is best for dry skin since it hides flaky skin best. The perfect shade should vanish in your skin without a trace. Test on skin before purchasing. Try Maybelline Clear Smooth Aqua Gel Foundation.

PHOTOS FROM WWW.STYLE.COM
PRODUCTS SHOT BY CHITO VECINA
GRAPHICS FROM GAS

GOLD powder can be used all over the face if dusted lightly and on your eyes as an eye shadow. It is the easiest and fastest way to make your tanned skin glow. To show off your tan, dust all over your body, specifically on your shoulder blades and legs. Try Fashion 21.



GRAB attention with an amazing pout by using of the longest color in the spectrum—red. It takes approximately five seconds to apply the color, but it is the most attractive yet hardest look to sport. Low in maintenance, yet high in fashion value. Great red lips should be celebrated. Try Awake, available at Rustan's.

Set her heart on fire

Make Valentine's truly unforgettable with two exclusive promos only from Charriol.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0425 Series of 2006

FOR A CASUAL, polished look, all you need is a nude sheer lippie that glides easily on your lips. This tube has a three-in-one purpose: it moisturizes, adds color and provides gloss. A real space- and money-saver. Shu Uemura tinted lip gloss

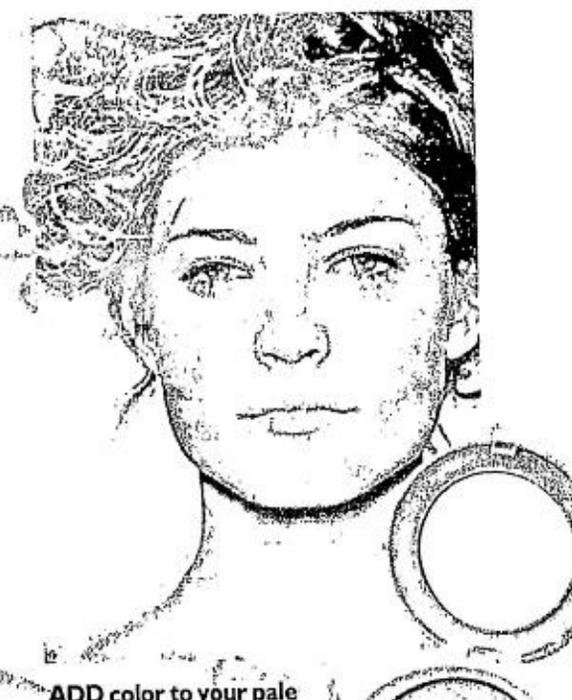
IF YOU look good in earthy tones, pick an eyeshadow shade that will complement the color of your blush. It's easy to use, and the shade can be used from day to night by just adding application. Lancôme eyeshadow

FOR THE MOST striking eyes, use liquid eyeliner with a fine point to get the best precision. Make sure it is water-proof so you dont have to worry about smudging. Awake liquid eyeliner stays on for hours.

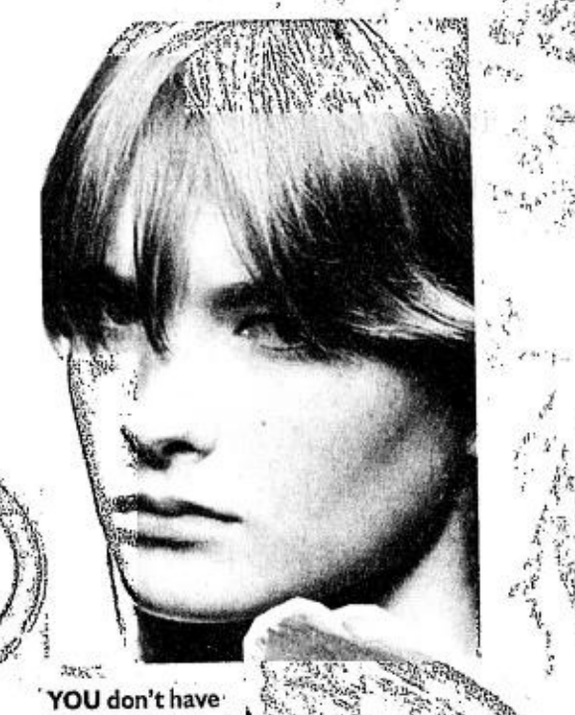
GET a glow with illuminating powder that's good to use under your eyebrows, under eye and lightly all over your face. It will add a subtle shimmer to your skin and make it look healthy. Shu Uemura glow-on blush

A SWIPE of a dark shade on the crease of your eyes will give the illusion of deep-set eyes. Use an eyeshadow brush and wet powder eyeshadow for more control. Balance this look by using nude lipstick. Avon eyeshadow

TO DRAW attention to your eyes, go for the smoky look, which is eye-catching and sexy. Make sure to use pencil for a cleaner, sharper finish. Smudge the lines with a cotton swab or tip applicator. Clinique eye pencil



ADD color to your pale skin with the use of a terra cotta powder blush. Most of the time, blush is all you need to brighten up your face. Smile and blush onto the apple of your cheeks. Movie Blush, available at Essenses



YOU don't have to keep biting your lips to make it look bitten. Opt for a berry lip shade. Make sure your lips are well-moisturized because lippies accentuate dryness of lips, and that can be unattractive. Fasio super glossy lipstick, available at Essenses

Beautiful inside and out

GUERLAIN Orchidee Imperiale

With Guerlain, I found products that worked wonders and looked great in their jewel-like packaging

ISSIMA Midnight Secret

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

BEAUTIFUL PACKAGING TAKES MY breath away. It's true that it is what's inside that should count, but a tube or jar that can pass for jewelry on your dresser or in your purse obviously makes for a more attractive choice.

With Guerlain (Geh-lan), I found products that worked wonders while also looking great in their jewel-like packaging. I hope the results of my road test will help you decide what Guerlain item you need. They are quite expensive, so think things over carefully.

Orchidee Imperiale cream for night and day (P19,998). The jar comes in rich colors of indigo, gold and sapphire blue, and looks like something out of an Egyptian royal vault. A beauty that will grace any dressing table or bathroom counter.

Guerlain's research team discovered that an orchid's secret to looking eternally preserved is in its roots. The team was then able to extract its essence and incorporate it into this cream.

What the product does is reverse, or at the very least delay, the aging process by strengthening the immune system of the skin. A failed immune system results in wrinkles, fine lines, age spots, large pores, dryness and inflammation in the form of skin redness or breakouts.

For my road test, I used my regular cleanser and toner, then went straight to the Guerlain cream day and night. No need for a separate moisturizer or even an eye cream, as the cream covers all.

The results? Better definition on my jaw line and cheekbones, and the cheeks under my eye area seemed plumper. Sagging was definitely minimized along with brown spots from old pimple marks and sun damage. I have an oily T-zone, but the cream seemed to have balanced it out, as there were no breakouts.

My pores look smaller now, my cheeks are dewy and the eye area is smooth and supple. My neck area and back of the hands, which are the first indicators of age, can compete with any teenager's, no kidding.

L'Instant D'Un Ete EDT 80 ml (P4,850). A creamy vanilla-type scent that can be worn night and day due to its magnolia and citrus scents. The actual notes are amber, citrus honey, magnolia flower and tonka bean.

My advice is to wear this scent sparingly when you are alone with the guy you really have the hots for. It's that sensual. Do test the fragrance on your arm and walk around for about 10 minutes before you decide to purchase. It helps to have an objective companion around to tell you if it works on you or not.

Issima Midnight Secret 30 ml (P5,750). This is my favorite product in Guerlain's skin care line, as there is nothing like it. If you are planning a romantic getaway or if that guy you are eyeing will see you early in the morning after a night of extreme partying and sleep deprivation, this is your secret weapon.

Just wash your face the night (or early morning) before hitting the sack, and apply three drops on the face. All you need is three hours' sleep and you will wake up looking fresh and blooming. Guaranteed.

KissKiss Maxi Shine lipstick (P1,550). If you are the type who suffers from consistently chapped lips but hates the greasy texture and shiny finish of gloss, who wishes for fuller lips or likes a sheer finish and wants the overall lip texture to improve long-term, then this lipstick is for you.

I couldn't resist the shade 666 Pink Shine for its dangerously sexy appeal. There are 15 shades, and they come in a dazzling white-gold metal case, all smelling like strawberry jam. My other favorite shades are Purple Shine, Red Shine, Mauve Shine and Chocolate Shine.

Guerlain makeup services are available at Philosophy salon by Mikaela (call 8163697). Guerlain products are exclusively available at Rustan's Makati and Tower.

GUERLAIN KissKiss Maxi Shine in 666 Pink Shine

MAKEOVER OF MS LOUIE MONTELIBANO

Everlasting youth

AFTER: Aging gracefully

THERE IS NO SUCH thing as age reversal. It's either you fight it or embrace it. You can exercise, eat right, apply all the expensive creams or, if you are really desperate, go under the knife.

But whatever you do, whatever you put on yourself, you will age anyway. Your skin gets drier, the tone duller and the lines more prominent.

Our model is 59 years old and has been using the same cream, makeup and look for the last 20 years. She's decided that now is the right time for a physical makeover before she hits the big 60 next year.

Her most noticeable problems are the dryness of her skin and the lines on her forehead.

Face—Our model has been using cake foundation for the longest time. I asked her to switch to liquid foundation. It is better to look for a silicone-based, light-reflective foundation.

A good product to try is Youngblood Liquid Foundation. It is very sheer and has built-in moisturizer so dry skin will not flake and lines will be less noticeable.

Eyebrows—Her eyebrows have been overtweezed and overarched. It gave the impression of her as someone stiff and old.

I decided to thicken her eyebrows by filling in the sparse area with a brunette pencil. To avoid artificial-looking brows, I blended it with a tiny firm brush using Mac Eyebrow Pencil in Brunette.

Eyes—Her eyes are somewhat droopy due to the loose skin. It is also wrinkled and discolored. Before I applied eyeshadow, I prepped the skin around the eye area with eye cream. Do not apply too much, as this will cause the eyeshadow to slide. I used a deep coppery brown eyeshadow on the eyelid and a golden apricot shadow on the crease.

BEFORE

Eyeliner and mascara are very important. I used a gray-black eyeliner to counteract the drooping eyelids and brushed two coats of mascara also in black. I used Maybelline Auto liner in Black and Maybelline Great Lash Mascara in Black.

Blush—I used Smashbox Spotlight for cheeks to give her that young, youthful glow. It is also light-reflective, that's why it gives the illusion of a poreless and wrinkle-free skin.

Lips—I used a cream-base lipstick (Revlon Moisture Lipstick) and topped it off with lip gloss for that dewy effect. Avoid using lip liner, as this will only emphasize the lines around the lip area.

Hair—We gave our model full bangs and colored her hair dark brown to cover the grayish roots. The color also warmed up her skin tone and made it appear healthier and glowing. The bangs covered the lines on her forehead and gave her that dignified yet youthful look.

I believe the secret to everlasting youth is all in our mind. We should learn to relax and let go. What appears on the outside is a reflection of what we really feel on the inside.

Chill, relax and you will see your skin and face reward you.

PHOTOS KEN GO
TEXT AND MAKEUP BARBI CHAN

The Fabulous Women of Philip Stein TESLAR

Philip Stein TESLAR, the ingenious watch brand offers wearer outstanding levels of health and wellness with its marvelous TESLAR technology, has created a loyal following among the best of Hollywood's female stars with its astounding combination of elegant form and unrivaled function.

Madonna, the modern musical genius, was among the firsts who have enjoyed the difference of Philip Stein TESLAR watches. She fell in love with Philip Stein TESLAR so much that she requested kid-size watches for her two children and gave away watches to her friends as gifts. One of them was the queen of talk, TV mogul and noted philanthropist Oprah Winfrey, who loved her white Philip Stein TESLAR watch so much, she added it to her televised Christmas list, the "Oprah Favorite Things," in 2005.

Soon the news of the wellness techno-watch reached the ears of Beyonce Knowles, the sultry singer of the trio Destiny's Child. She is known for having excellent taste in everything. Philip Stein TESLAR watch being a masterpiece in itself, its elegant design and brilliant technology won the pop idol's heart. Canadian punk rocker Avril Lavigne too heard of the novel Philip Stein TESLAR and got herself one and she has been rocking ever since with her Philip Stein TESLAR.

Philip Stein TESLAR has established itself as the best fashion and wellness accessory. To this gorgeous actress Julia Roberts and acclaimed performer Natalie Portman can testify, being proud owners of Philip Stein TESLAR watches themselves.

Naomi Campbell, an icon in international modeling who graced many designer shows such as Ralph Lauren, Versace, Dolce and Gabbana and covers of fashion magazines like Vogue, couldn't agree more. She has been spotted with her Philip Stein TESLAR on, along with fellow Brazilian international fashion model Gisele Bundchen.

Philip Stein TESLAR is a collection of tastefully designed timepieces with dual-time zones for the multitasking achiever. Women can choose from two watch lines: the small case and the large case watches, both with optional double diamond or diamond embellishment and with a wide array of interchangeable straps and hot colors to choose from.

There are colorful satin-strapped large case timepieces embellished with diamonds for the glitzy gala, classic leather-strapped small case watches for the talk show episode, colorful rubber-strapped pieces for the more casual album launch. From the runway to the Rodeo Drive, there is a Philip Stein TESLAR watch to suit every occasion and mood.

Aside from its fabulous look, Philip Stein TESLAR watches is a hit among stars for the technological marvel TESLAR chip placed inside every timepiece, the revolutionary technology designed to reinforce and protect the body's own electromagnetic field against electromagnetic currents emitted by cellular phones, computers and other electronic devices, which were proven to pose hazards to our health.

The TESLAR chip, when worn at the left wrist, brings about the noticeable, miraculous healing effect that only Philip Stein TESLAR watches offer. From a subtle pulsing, tingling sensation, calmness in normally stressful situations and deep, restful sleep, to improved concentration, increased energy and productivity, and a remarkable overall improvement in wellbeing, Philip Stein TESLAR wearers across the globe have noticed the pleasant change and taken pleasure in living optimal levels of health and wellbeing,

Philip Stein TESLAR also offers regal chronograph watches and bracelets pour homme.

The Philip Stein TESLAR watch collection is exclusively available at Lucerne boutiques in Level 2 Shangri-La Plaza Mall and Level 1, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, and Chronos boutique in Ground Level, V-Mall, Greenhills Shopping Center. For more information, please visit www.philipstein.com.

Science meets Style

a close watch on electronic pollution and the only watch that can make you feel better

Electronic Pollution

We live in a world of high technology and sophisticated living. Our modern lifestyles encourage us to move and work faster in an attempt to accomplish more in less time than ever before. As a result of this stressful lifestyle and the pervasive electronic technology that powers it, our life-expectancy increases while our life-long health declines.

With our increased usage and exposure to electronic gadgets, such as computers, mobile phones, and televisions, all emitting health-threatening Extremely Low Frequencies (ELF), our environment becomes increasingly polluted by the electronic frequencies.

In Honor of Nikola Tesla: A Pioneer of Energy Science

The TESLAR® technology was named after Nikola Tesla, who worked with Thomas Edison. Tesla, a brilliant inventor, is the man who gave us alternating current. He is considered the father of scalar, non-Hertzian technology, the technology used in the TESLAR® chip

Philip Stein® TESLAR®

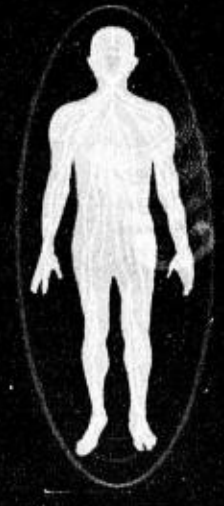
In the Philip Stein® TESLAR® watch are two specially designed TESLAR® chips. The TESLAR® chips emit a signal of relaxation and calm, which helps reinforce and protect the body's own electromagnetic field against unwelcome interactions with external electronic pollution, allowing the body to maintain more normal balance.

What to Expect

Because every Philip Stein® TESLAR® wearer may have differing levels of sensitivity to electromagnetic fields, each wearer may experience different reactions. In the last 20 years, studies have shown that the TESLAR® watch helps to improve migraine, arthritis, depression, insomnia and jet lags.

As a result of the TESLAR® effect, wearers have experienced:

- Deeper, more restful nighttime sleep
- More calm and less tension in normally stressful situations
- Improved concentration and ability to focus at work
- Increased levels of energy
- An over-all improvement in well-being



Health Watch

The Philip Stein® TESLAR® wearers include such notable celebrities as Oprah Winfrey, Madonna, Jack Nicholson, Barbara Walters, Avril Lavigne, etc. The watch is popular amongst sportsmen, as it is proven that it also helps to ease aches, pain and frigidity. Professional athletes and a number of US Athletes training for the Summer 2004 Olympics, including Kenta' Bell, Ty Sevin, and Penny Blackwell. They have claimed that their endurance and overall performance also see significant improvement.

Experience the TESLAR® effect and let yourself feel more relaxed, more rested and less tense. Try it. Wear it. Live it. Feel it.

PHILIP STEIN®
TESLAR®

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• **Seedless Watermelon P29.50**/kg • **Native Red Onions P41.95**/kg
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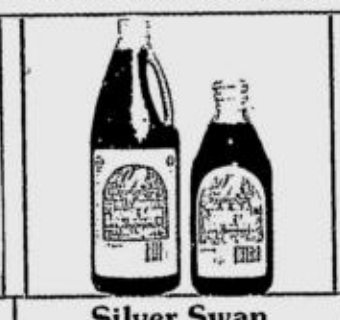
Tender Juicy Hotdog
1k **P148.90**/pk
Chunkee Corned Beef
190g **P26.20**/can

Magnolia Gold Label
Ice Cream
Cookies & Cream, Double Dutch, Dulce de Leche, Rocky Road
1.9lt **P205.00**/tub



Silver Swan
Soy Sauce
340ml (glass) **P8.50**/bot
1000ml (plastic) **P22.95**/bot

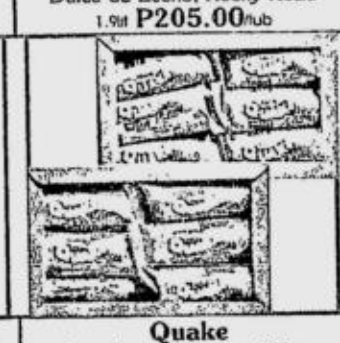
Del Monte
Tomato Sauce (in pouches)
115g **P10.55**/pouch
200g **P12.85**/pouch
250 g **P14.50**/pouch 1k **P53.95**/pouch

Magnolia
Fresh Chicken Wings **P114.00**/kilo
Fresh Chicken Thighs **P105.00**/kilo

Fry Top
Bread Crumbs 230g **P53.00**/pk
Tenka Ichiban
Rice Crackers
56g **P27.00**/pk 112g **P52.00**/pk

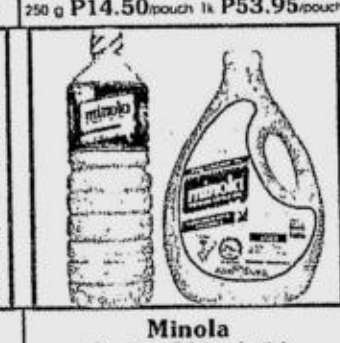
Susan Baker
Cooking Oil
500ml **P27.75**/bot 1lt **P50.25**/bot
2lt **P96.95**/bot

Maya Hotcake Mix
Original
200g **P18.95**/box
500g **P39.95**/box

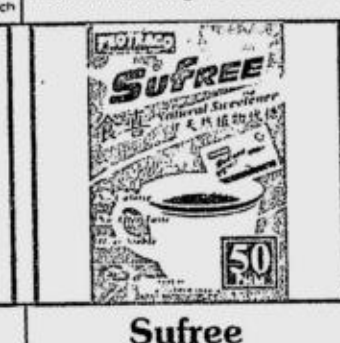


Quake
Chocolate, Ube Layer Cakes, Strawberry, Pandan Rolls
12x25g **P47.00**/pk
Caramel 12x38g **P67.25**/pk

One Tea Drink
Green, Green Lite, Red, Red Lite, Yellow, Yellow Lite, Chrysanthemum, Chrysanthemum w/ Honey
500ml **P12.75**/bot



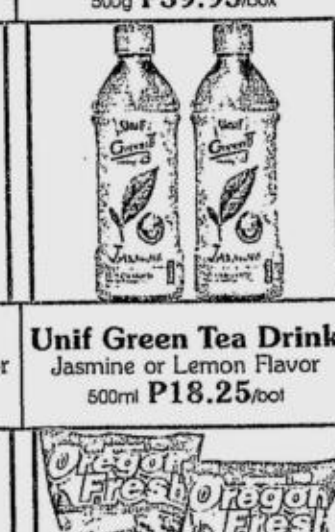
Minola
Cooking Oil (in plastic)
1lt **P60.30**/bot 1.6k **P107.75**/jug
3.2k **P210.75**/jug



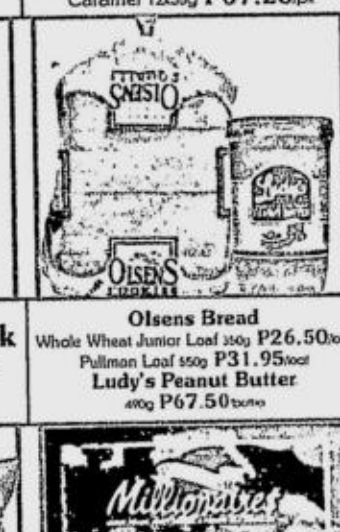
Sufree
Natural Sweetener
50packs **P125.00**/box

Real Fresh Milk
Regular 1lt **P50.95**/btl
Leche Pascual Yogurt
Thick & Creamy, Peach & Passion Fruit, Non-Fat Black Cherries 125g **P24.75**/cup

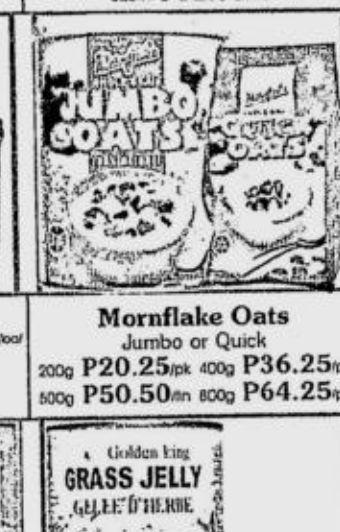
Lipton RTD Tea
Lemon or Green Tea Flavor
250ml **P9.50**/brick



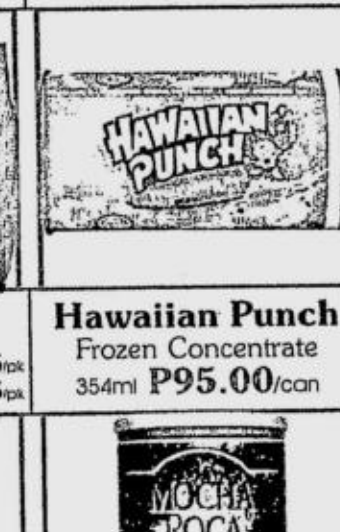
Unif Green Tea Drink
Jasmine or Lemon Flavor
500ml **P18.25**/bot



Olsens Bread
Whole Wheat Junior Loaf 350g **P26.50**/loaf
Pullman Loaf 550g **P31.95**/loaf
Ludy's Peanut Butter
490g **P67.50**/bottle

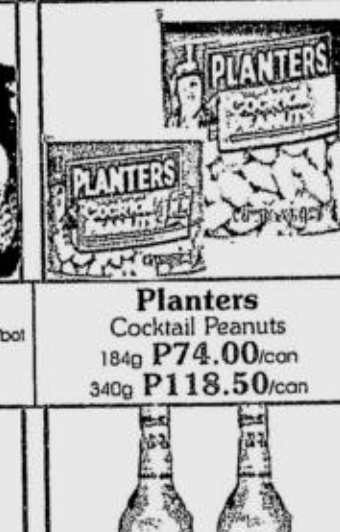


Mornflake Oats
Jumbo or Quick
200g **P20.25**/pk 400g **P36.25**/pk
500g **P50.50**/tin 800g **P64.25**/pk

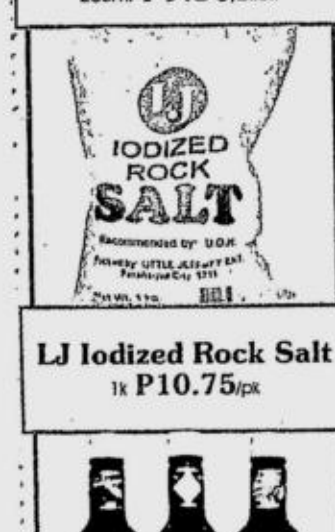


Hawaiian Punch
Frozen Concentrate
354ml **P95.00**/can

Colman's
Mint Sauce 250ml **P155.00**/bot
Tartare Sauce
250ml **P129.50**/bot

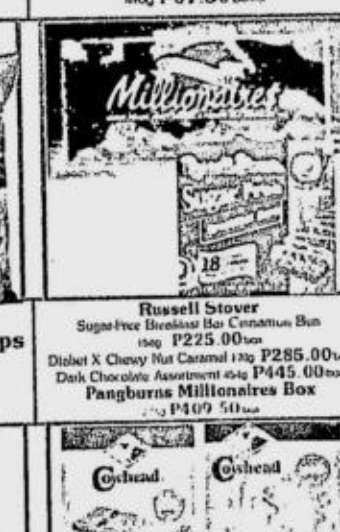


Planters
Cocktail Peanuts
184g **P74.00**/can
340g **P118.50**/can



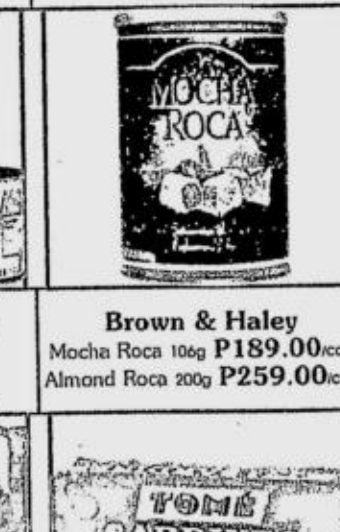
LJ Iodized Rock Salt
1k **P10.75**/pk

Oregon Fresh Potato Chips
Original, Hot & Spicy
160g **P80.00**/pk

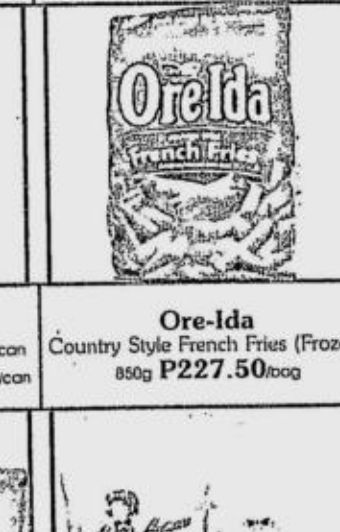


Russell Stover
Sugar-Free Breakfast Bar Cinnamon Bun 150g **P225.00**/box
Diabet X Chewy Nut Caramel 120g **P285.00**/box
Dark Chocolate Assortment 454g **P445.00**/box
Pangburns Millionaires Box
[illegible] **P400.50**/box

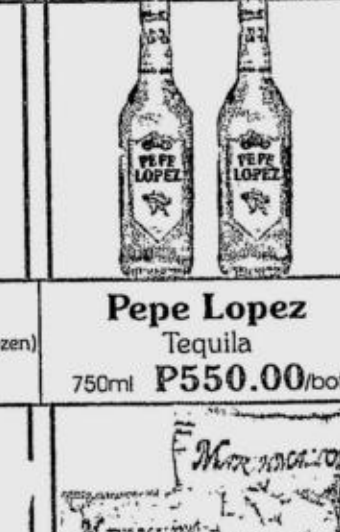
Wei-Chuan
Water Chestnuts Whole, Sliced
227g **P22.95**/can
Golden King
Grass Jelly 540g **P25.75**/can



Brown & Haley
Mocha Roca 106g **P189.00**/can
Almond Roca 200g **P259.00**/can



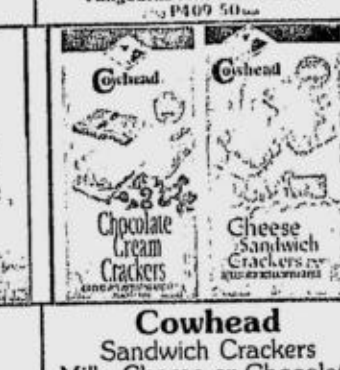
Ore-Ida
Country Style French Fries (Frozen)
850g **P227.50**/bag



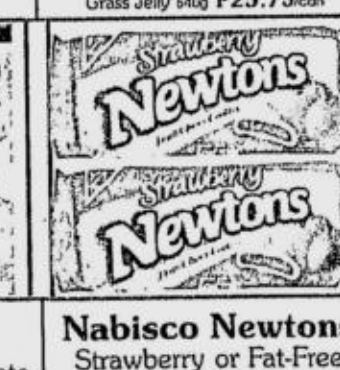
Pepe Lopez
Tequila
750ml **P550.00**/bot

A-1 Steak Sauce
Bold & Spicy, Sweet & Tangy or Thick & Hearty
300ml **P150.50**/bot

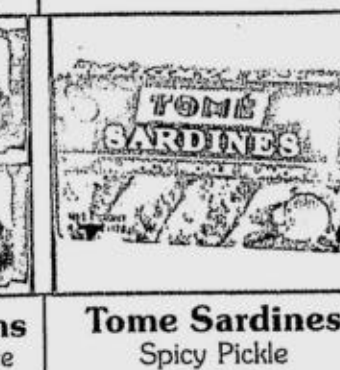
Knox Gelatine
Unflavored
28g **P56.75**/box
227g **P389.50**/box



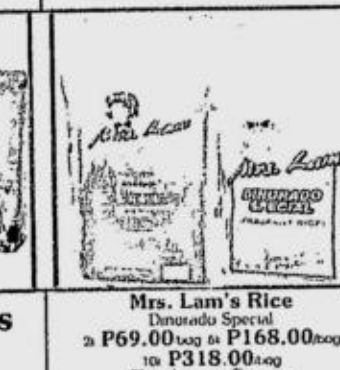
Cowhead
Sandwich Crackers
Milk, Cheese or Chocolate
190g **P50.00**/box



Nabisco Newtons
Strawberry or Fat-Free
340g **P139.00**/pk

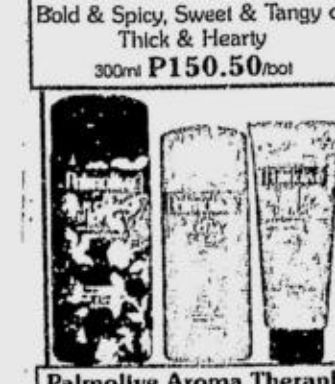


Tome Sardines
Spicy Pickle
125g **P49.95**/can

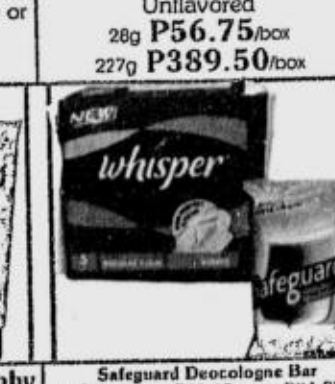


Mrs. Lam's Rice
Dinorado Special
2k **P69.00**/bag 5k **P168.00**/bag
10k **P318.00**/bag
Thai Jasmine Fragrant
2k **P100.00**/bag 5k **P245.00**/bag

Marshmallows
Mellow Pastel 100g **P10.95**/pk
Mellow Softer Treat
250g **P26.50**/pk

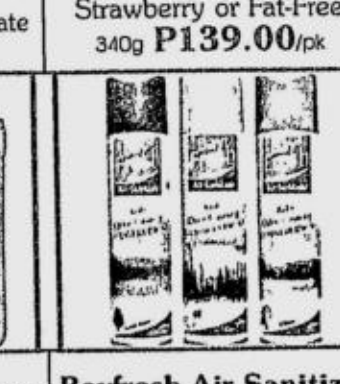


Palmolive Aroma Theraphy
Energy, Sensual or Anti-Stress
Shampoo 100ml **P36.95**/bot
200 ml **P68.25**/bot
Conditioner 200ml **P71.50**/bot

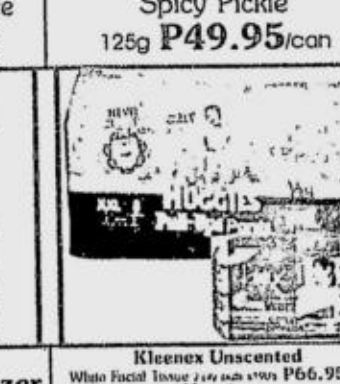


Safeguard Deocologne Bar
60g **P9.60**/pc 90g **P16.65**/pc 125g **P24.95**/pc
Whisper Ultra
Sapphire
Reg Flow Wings 8s **P26.65**/pk 8s **P40.50**/pk
Heavy Flow Wings 8s **P31.50**/pk
Extra Heavy Flow Wings 8s **P31.45**/pk

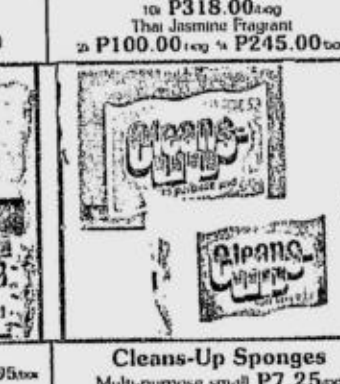
Mr. Muscle
Drain Declogger 600ml **P68.25**/bot
Mild & Mildew Killer, Kitchen Cleaner
500ml **P84.50**/bot



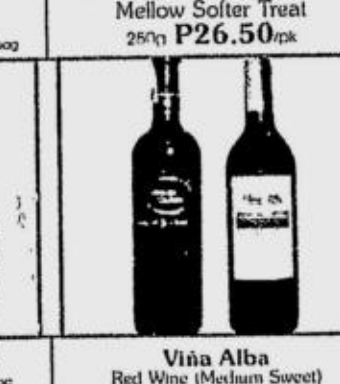
Bayfresh Air Sanitizer
Citrus, Cool Breeze, Floral
370ml **P150.00**/bot



Kleenex Unscented
White Facial Tissue [illegible] **P66.95**/box
Huggies
Pull-Ups Pants [illegible] **P127.75**/pk
Kotex
Fresh Panliner, Longer & Wider
[illegible] **P43.95**/pk



Cleans-Up Sponges
Multi-purpose small **P7.25**/pc
Double-Purpose Pad
80mm x 100mm x 30mm **P12.95**/pc
Soft Scrub small **P13.50**/pc



Viña Alba
Red Wine (Medium Sweet)
750ml **P125.00**/bot
Vinum Classic Merlot-Shiraz
750ml **P169.50**/bot

Cash&Carry Supermarket

LIFESTYLE

Contributing editors
Apples Aberin-Sadhwani
and Jenni Epperson

FASHION

an affair to remember

A PROM SPECIAL

ON HER: dress by Puey Quiñones (0916-7763098); earrings from Mercelles, Power Plant; gold bag from Firma, Greenbelt 3. On him: Plum shirt, P1,950 and pink tie, P1,950, both by Springfield, Greenbelt 3; jeans by Girbaud, Glorietta; green belt by Diesel, Power Plant

PHOTOGRAPHY JAKE VERSOZA, M4 COLLECTIVE
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT IAN MIRANDA
STYLIST ROSARIO HERRERA STYLE LAB
JUNIOR STYLIST JANET DELA FUENTE STYLE LAB
MAKEUP BERNY ABELEDA STYLE LAB
HAIR CHER CABUHAT, PRIVE SALON
MODELS TANY ASOCIEN AND PAOLO T. MODELS

Confessions of a prom queen wannabe

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

IF I HAD THE POWER to change one defining sartorial moment in my life, it would be prom night and the overdone meringue of a dress I wore.

Okay, okay, so it was the '80s and we were allowed to be over the top in a "Dynasty" sort of way (hmmm, I wonder if younger readers can relate?). But that doesn't make me feel any better.

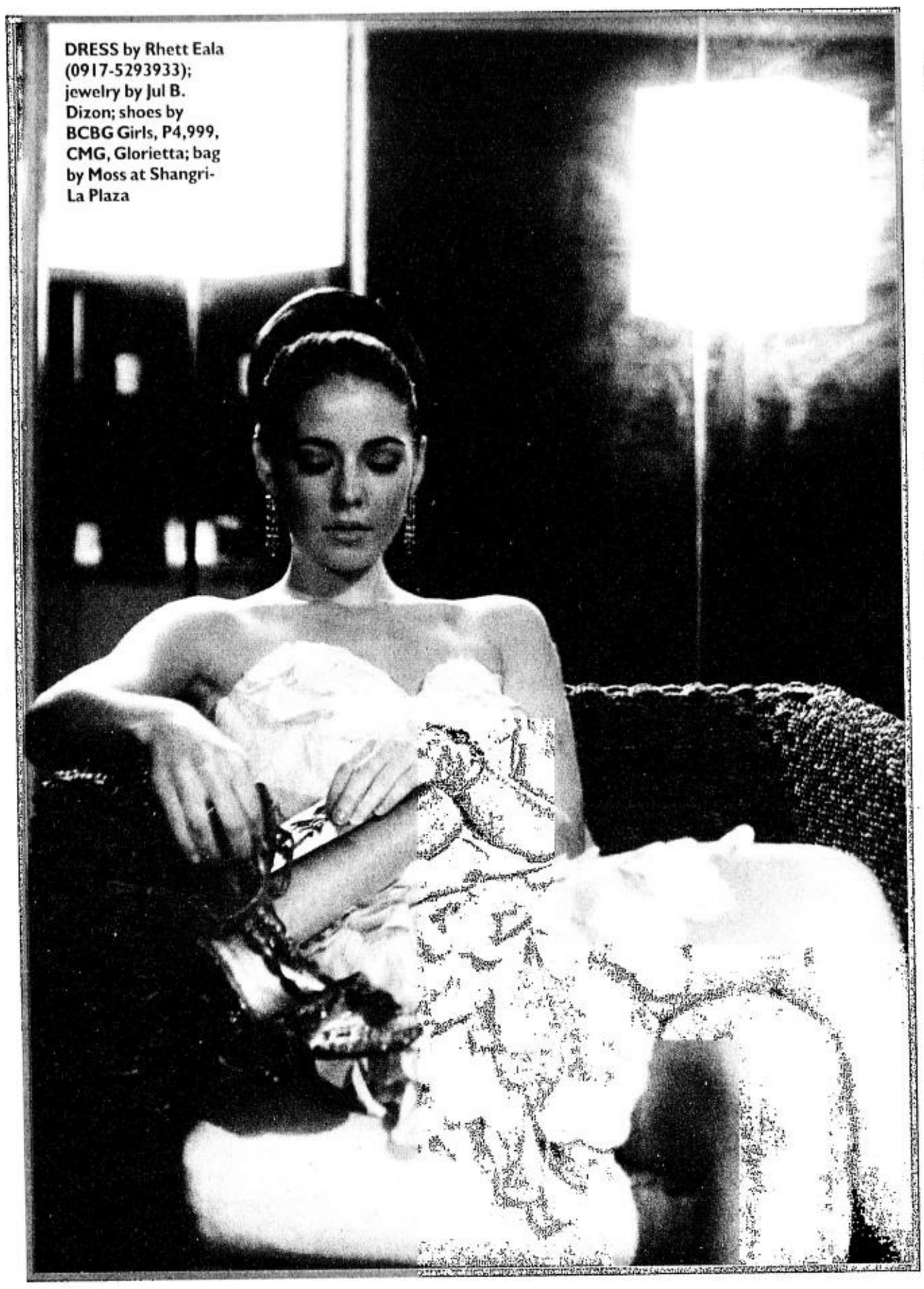
I can't help but cringe when I see old photos of a not very fashion-savvy *moi* in my white and peach confection—complete with dyed-to-match peach, er, salmon pumps and wrist corsage!

I was no prom queen, but in the tradition of "Zapped," a cheesy prom movie from, you guessed it, the '80s, I would have really enjoyed wearing that dainty little tiara!

So, readers out there who are about to attend their proms or graduation balls, do take heed. Whatever you choose to wear now can

CONFESSIONS/ G2

D.I.Y.
Canon
Beyond the Way Away
Yin + Yang



DRESS by Rhett Eala (0917-5293933); jewelry by Jul B. Dizon; shoes by BCBG Girls, P4,999, CMG, Glorietta; bag by Moss at Shangri-La Plaza

Girls, take heed: What you wear on prom night may haunt you for the rest of your fashionable lives

ON HER: dress by Alex Bitong (0920-9215302); necklace from Mercelles, bag by Firma. On him: white shirt by Tru Youth; jeans by Diesel; belt by Diesel

Confessions of a prom queen wannabe

DRESS by Ronaldo Arnaldo (0917-5259823); jewelry by Jul B. Dizon, Manila Peninsula Hotel

From page G1

haunt you the rest of your fashionable lives!

What's a girl to do, right? Well, start off by discussing options with your parents. Whether you like it or not, they are paying for your dress so you must take budget into consideration.

Once you've done that, you can actually start choosing a design that suits your personality and body type. Remember, it's important to be ultra-comfortable in whatever it is you opt to wear. That's one way to ensure that you enjoy your prom experience.

If you are on a strict budget, check out the different retail or department stores for pretty prom frocks. The only problem with this is you run the risk of bumping into someone wearing the same dress.

Another option would be to go to a "costurera" to have a particular design copied.

Of course, if the budget permits, it's a total treat to go to a designer of your choice to have something really special made. The designer can even help you choose accessories to complete your look and make you stand out even more.

There are countless prom dresses to choose from nowadays, so there really is no excuse to look less than your prom queen best. Ten or 20 years from now, you should be able to look at your photos with a smile—of pleasure, not sarcastic humor.

Now, if only I could go back in time, I would definitely grab any of these fabulous frocks and change the course of history. Mine, anyway!

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

DRESS by Jun Escario (0920-9105541); jewelry by Jul B. Dizon; shoes by Lewre, P1,999, CMG, Glorietta

PHOTOGRAPHY JAKE VERSOZA, M4 COLLECTIVE
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT IAN MIRANDA
STYLIST ROSARIO HERERRA/STYLE LAB
JUNIOR STYLIST JANET DELA FUENTE/STYLE LAB
MAKEUP BERN ABELEDA/STYLE LAB
HAIR CHER CABUHAT/ PRIVE II SALON (3746846)
MODELS TANYA/SOCIETY AND PAOLO/T-MODELS

Glow in the dark

From page G8

Beaded evening bag

Choose a gem-studded handbag to pair with your monochromatic frock.

PHOTOGRAPHY
JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN
STYLING JENNI EPPERSON
DIGITAL IMAGING ARNZ LORENZO
HAIR AND MAKEUP
LOURD RAMOS
FOR MAC COSMETICS,
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MODEL
MARIKO DAVIES OF T-MODELS
ALL CLOTHES AVAILABLE
AT DRESS SALON AT RUSTAN'S
SPECIAL THANKS TO
JOEL TANTOCO
AND MARIKO JACINTO

Flower pin

A glittery, sequined or fresh flower gives your cocktail dress a romantic touch.

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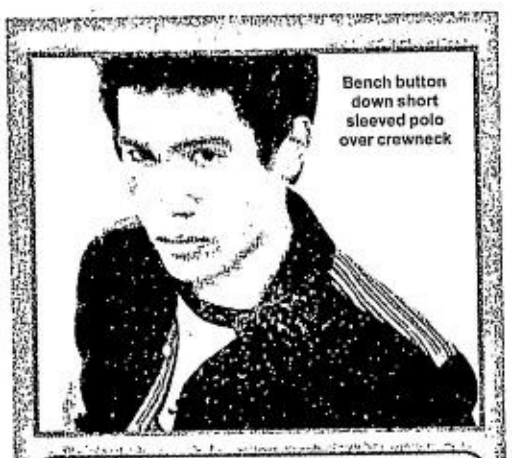
Professional Designer Certificate
(6 Months / 3 Terms)
Term 1 - Feb., 28 - Apr. 28, '06 (2 months)
Basic Pattern - 8 Tuesdays 9AM-6PM
Basic Illustration - 8 Wednesdays 9AM-6PM
Children's Wear - 8 Thursdays 9AM-6PM
Fee - P22,000. (P7,500. / course)

Designer Package (4 Months / 2 Terms)
Term 1 - Feb., 28 - Apr. 28, '06 (2 months)
Basic Pattern - 8 Tuesdays 9AM-6PM
Basic Illustration - 8 Wednesdays 9AM-6PM
Fee - P16,000. (P8,000. / course)

Other beginner courses:
Men's Wear - Mar. 3 - Apr. 29 (8 Fridays 9-6)
Accessories - Mar. 3- Apr. 29 (8 Fridays 9-1)
Sewing-individual 1-on-1 schedule -P7,500.

Other advance course (Terms 2 & 3)
Advance Pattern, Advance Illustration, Haute Couture, Graduation Show Collection and On-the-Job Training

Tel. 635-5383 Cell: 0917 830 2108
#1 San Miguel Ave.cor.Shaw Blvd. Unit 2803



Bench button down short sleeved polo over crewneck

Want Sam?

Far Surigao is hometown for this unassuming balikbayan from Ohio. His smile showing his pearly white teeth is a true turn-on, girls definitely go gaga over the sight of this guy. His 49-day stint on the reality show, Pinoy Big Brother, charmed the hearts of many Filipino girls. Fame has totally made him shine he's everywhere. He's on every sitcom and commercial on the boob tube.

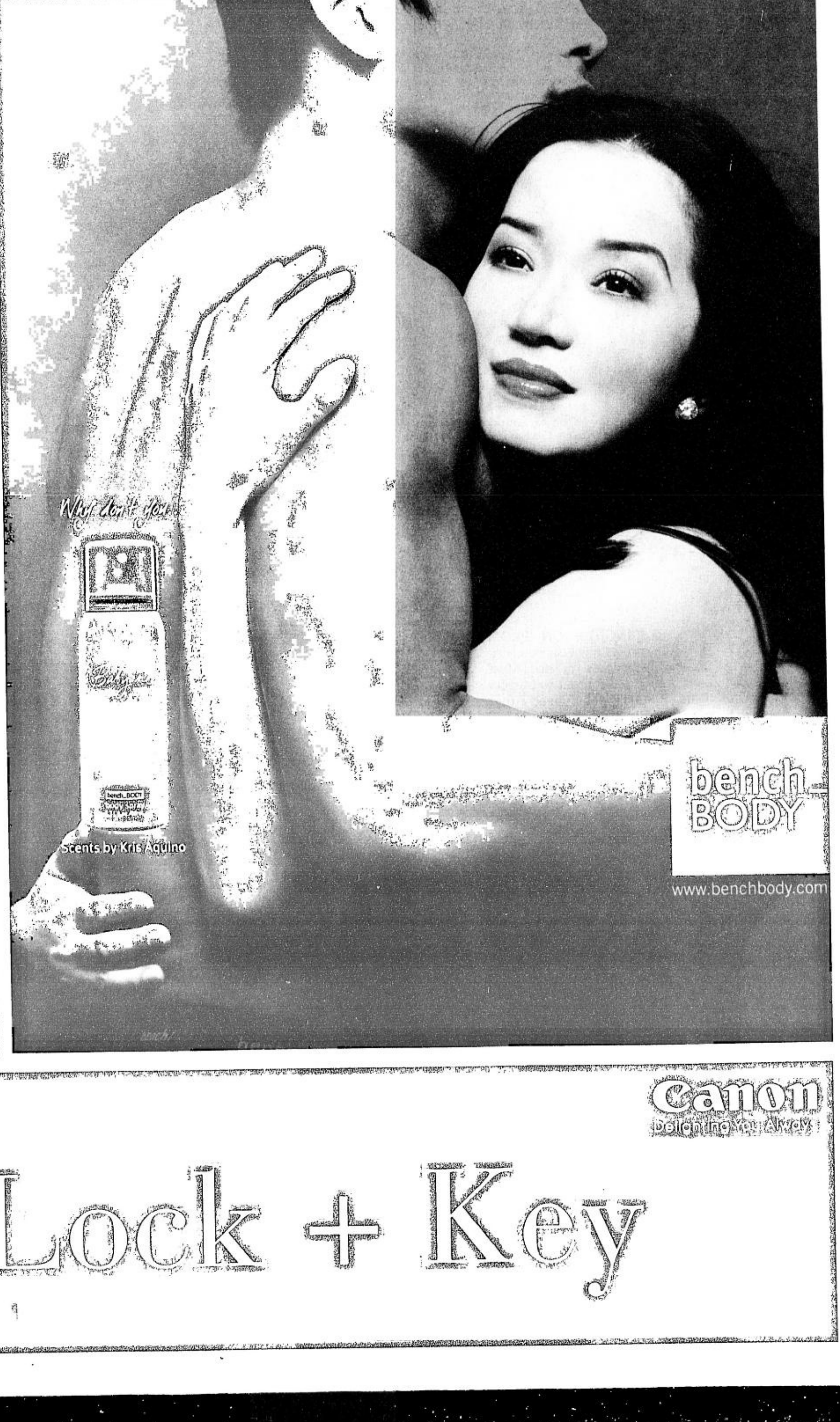
Now Sam Milby just could not get enough of the celebrity status he gained in no time. He has been signed up as one of the latest image models of the country's retail giant, Bench. His presence has become very strong in print ads over major broadsheets and glossies, gigantic billboards adorning major thoroughfares, and interiors of almost every Bench outlet in the country.

Along with his signature prop, a black guitar and his fantastic smile, Sam exudes a distinctive character that earned him to become a Bench image model. His modesty besides his good looks will surely take him to farther heights.

Full zipper jacket with felt patch over crewneck too and Bench Overhauled denim pants; Accessories: Leather belt and bonnet.

Full zipper jacket with hood and round neck shirt

ADVT.



D.I.Y.

Canon
Delighting You Always

Lock + Key

Sweetheart

CHIFFON dress and matching bag, Kate Torralba (0906-2699056); purple sandals, Schu

TIERED jersey dress, House of Rajo; necklace and shoes, Schu; bag, Kate Torralba

STRIPED dress and matching bag, Kate Torralba; necklace, Schu

SATIN dress, Patty Eustaquio (0917-8979474); shoes, Schu; pearl necklaces (used as a bracelet), Ensembles

destone

VINTAGE pink lace dress, P1,295, Marni's Room (0917-3888918); necklace, Happy David

FLORAL printed dress, P1,495, X; pearls, Ensembles; shoes, Pretty Fit

PINK corset and frilly skirt, 22 BC; purse, Kate Torralba; necklace, Happy David

PEACH dress with beading, P1,195, Karimadon; copper necklace and shoes, Schu

retail

Picture-perfect princess frocks

By Bianca Consunji

MANY HIGH-SCHOOL girls, the moment they step into the campus as freshmen, look forward to their prom; others, however, don't like the fuss and frippery of it all. Still, most girls do go for the experience: after all, isn't the prom the center of nearly all high school-themed movies?

However, high-school movies never show how hard it is to find the dress of the night. More often than not, they just waltz into the ballroom, resplendent in glittering gowns and pretty corsages (with the good-looking date, of course).

But the search for the perfect prom gown is often more grief than glamour, especially since nowadays, no one wants to look generic.

Stuck for ideas? Here's a tip: Ditch the standard spaghetti-strapped dress with a poncho/shawl and look for something that's really you.

You could be a glamorous drama queen, or the sweet girl next door, or the rebellious edgy rocker chick. But always keep in mind that comfort is key. Don't be overly trendy (if you don't want to cringe at your photos 10 years from now). And remember that accessories are vital in personalizing your dress.

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

PHOTOGRAPHY SARA BLACK
HAIR AND MAKEUP TATIN YANG
MODELS CAMILLE CRUZ, ABBIE ALMASCO, HAZEL AGUILAR, AND PRINCESS VIOLAGO

Rebel rocker

SEQUINED gold top, Louis Claparols (0927-5978816); black skirt, P695, Karimadon; gold cuff and earrings, Happy David

PURPLE multi-way Cosmo dress, Kate Torralba; necklace, Happy David

MINI dress with bolero and sequined collar, Tina Navarro (0920-9241808); rainbow bag, Kate Torralba; purple faux-crocodile pumps, Pretty Fit

CANDY-COLORED top, Kate Torralba; necklace, Happy David

destone

LEOPARD print dress, P995, Karimadon; necklace, Happy David; black velvet sandals, Schu

SILVER velvet dress, P1,395, Karimadon; necklace and bracelet, Schu; black open-toed pumps, Pretty Fit

PLEATED dress, P1,495, Vintage by Cinderella; necklace, Happy David; yellow-green shoes, Pretty Fit

VELVET dress, Freeway; cropped jacket, Ilaya; faux pearls, Ensembles; flats, Pretty Fit

retail

Beau of the ball

'60S-INSPIRED brown coat and pants with green in detailed cuff, polo shirt and slim tie set, all from Randy Ortiz (02-9228375); Manels, black shoes, P2,495

PHOTOGRAPHY ARTHUR ABRAHAM/ PARADIGM VISIONS INC.
STYLING MILLET ARZAGA
GROOMING ABBY ARENAS-DE LEON FOR LANCÔME
MODELS HAMISH FRASER AND ALEC VAN DIERENDONCK, CAL CARRIES

By Alex Y. Vergara

DRESSING UP ON PROM night has always been serious business for girls. Most boys are simply content to borrow ill-fitting suits that belonged either to Dad or Big Brother. As far as old movies go, what usually concerned boys was the post-party scenario.

Perish the thought. Of course, boys will always be boys. Giving the girls' chaperons the slip even before the last dance ends and spending precious moments alone with their objects of affection will always be on top of their agenda. These days, however, they also want to go through such a rite of passage in style.

"As recent as last year, almost all my clients were girls," says fashion designer Joey Samson. "This time, however, I'm attending to an equal number of boys."

And most of them won't settle for the usual suit. Some even came to Samson's shop armed with the latest issue of a glossy men's magazine featuring one of his works. Most of them wanted him to do a similar grey wool number with an exaggerated collar.

That's probably one reason fashion-forward boys are now going to designers. Unlike most youngsters their age, they don't subscribe anymore to the herd mentality. Looking even remotely like the next guy, especially if he's a rival to a fair maiden's heart, is a big no-no.

"After years of wearing jeans," says fashion designer Nono Palmos, "young men are starting to realize that there's glamour and power in wearing a well-made suit or a luxurious pair of Oxfords."

Going for a sleek and streamlined wardrobe, he says, is a mere extension of men's (and boys') current fascination with equally stylish and expensive "toys for the big boys" such as plasma TVs, luxury watches and roadsters.

And based on fashion designer Randy Ortiz's experience, most boys nowadays have a clear idea of what they want.

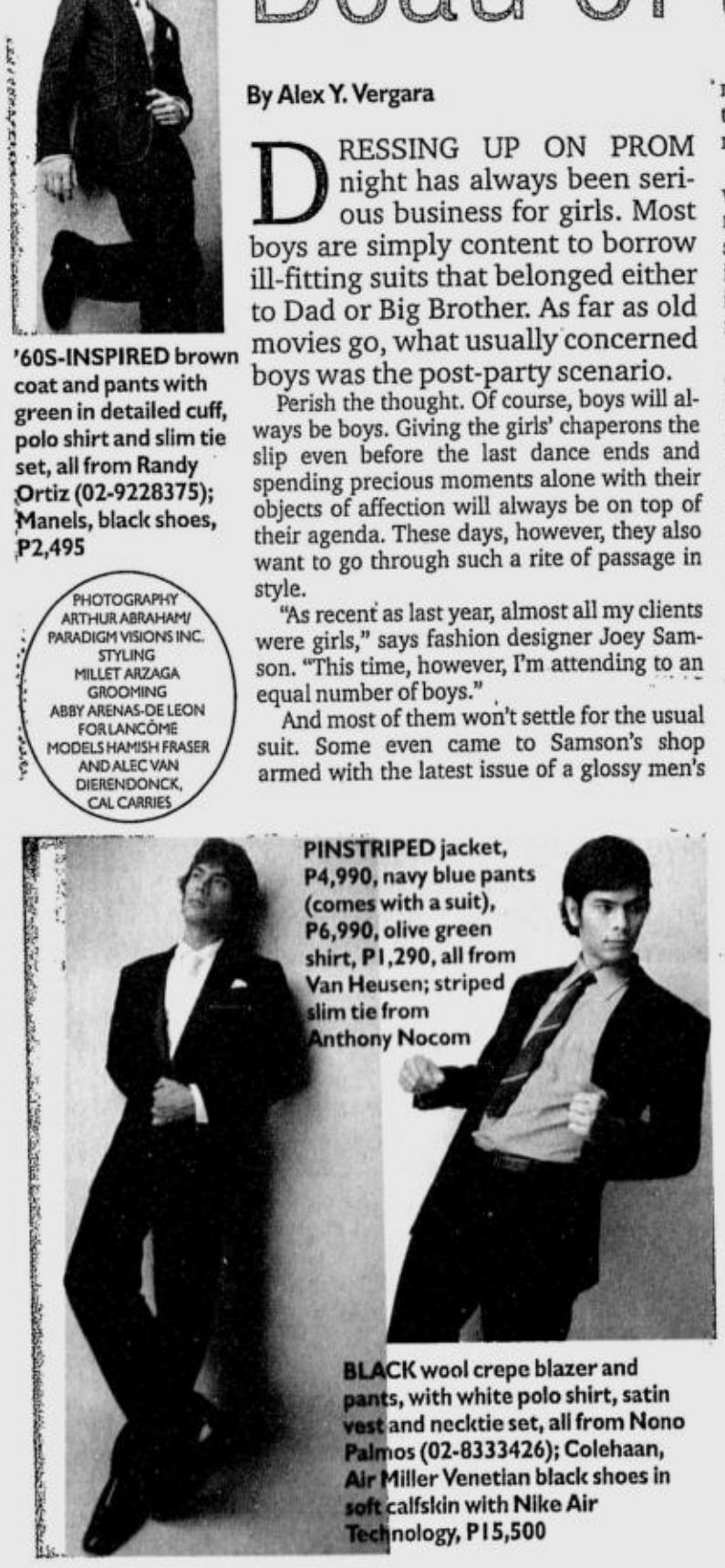
"It's still the parents, of course, who foot the bill," he says. "Most of the time, however, it's their sons who ultimately call the shots as to what to wear. Just like girls, boys also like to catch attention, albeit in more subtle ways."

That doesn't rule out, however, the possibility of snagging the right prom outfit in a department store or shop featuring mass-produced labels. Half the number of suits featured in this photo shoot, for instance, were sourced from the likes of Anthony Nocom for SM, Rico Salandanan for The Landmark, Zara and Van Heusen.

Nocom and his colleagues put premium on fit. "Apart from buying a nice formal white dress shirt, those who aren't used to wearing suits should stick to classic cuts in solid colors such as black and navy blue," says Nocom.

Indeed, it always pays to dress up impeccably on prom night even if your mind is wandering off elsewhere. A boy may not always get the girl to say yes, but years from now, he can at least take comfort in the fact that he looked and felt his best while trying.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



PINSTRIPED jacket, P4,990, navy blue pants (comes with a suit), P6,990, olive green shirt, P1,290, all from Van Heusen; striped slim tie from Anthony Nocom

BLACK wool crepe blazer and pants, with white polo shirt, satin vest and necktie set, all from Nono Palmos (02-8333426); Colehaan, Air Miller Venetian black shoes in soft calfskin with Nike Air Technology, P15,500

ON HAMISH: charcoal gray single breasted 2-button fully lined jacket, P3,299.75, flat-front pants, P699.75, bright pink stretch convertible collar long-sleeved shirt, P899.75, all from Anthony Nocom; black belt, P695. On Alec: black jacket, P2,600, black pants, P795, white shirt, P820, all from Rico Salandanan at The Landmark; Manels black belt, P595; The Landmark black necktie, P298.

ON HAMISH: periwinkle blue suit, blue grey polo shirt and V-neck shirt set, all from Joey Samson (0918-9592541); Manel's black lace-up shoes, P2,495. On Alec: Slim-cutting suit with wing collar detail in pure Italian wool and flat-front slim pants, all from Miguel Francisco (02-9255495). Van Heusen polo shirt, P1,190; Colehaan Air Miller Wing Oxford black shoes, P15,500

IN TOP PROM

IT TAKES MORE THAN THE RIGHT SUIT TO make or break an entire look. Apart from the all-important fit, designers Anthony Nocom, Joey Samson, Nono Palmos and Randy Ortiz offer a number of practical tips to this year's batch of prom boys:

- A good pair of well-shined black leather shoes is a safe bet. Leather shoes (no matter what color) with thick rubber soles a la Doc Martens have no place in the ballroom.
- Mickey Mouse belongs to Disneyland. Wide, poly-silk neckties featuring cartoon characters as well as the striped, office variety are no-nos. Plain, slim ties are currently the rage.
- What color of suit to wear? When in doubt, stick to tried-and-tested colors and looks. Guys who have had more practice before the big night can wade into uncharted fashion territory (think Samson's periwinkle suit), especially if they feel they can pull it off.
- Regardless of the design, the suit should be snug yet comfortable to enable the wearer to make smart moves on the dance floor.
- The suit's material is nearly as important as its fit. Don't scrimp on the fabric because that's the foundation of any well-made suit. It largely determines the weight, body and volume of any outfit.
- Get a haircut a week or so before the event and not on the very day itself.
- It's important to look clean-cut, dapper and young. Apart from being fraught with risks, borrowing a suit from Dad or Big Brother ruins the entire experience of teaching a boy to dress up like a fine, young man.

BLACK jacket, P8,950, checkered polo shirt, P2,450, slim pinstriped pants, P4,550, and gray necktie, P1,950, all from Zara Man, Rockwell; Van Heusen reversible belt, P1,290; painted skateboard by FABO

Glam on display

BLACK lace gown with red floral detail by Rajo Laurel, price available upon request

BLACK gown with blue floral detail and sash, Rajo Laurel; necklace, Happy David

TAN and gold jersey gown, House of Rajo; earrings, Happy David

PINK-AND-RED paisley gown by Eric delos Santos from the House of Laurel (0920-9264342)

designer

FUCHSIA and gold dress, P1,495, Vintage by Cinderella; gold cuff, Happy David; red sandals, Schu

RED gown with chiffon side detail, 22BC; rhinestone necklace, P1,395, Karimadon

TEAL slip dress with rhinestone detail, P1,895, Karimadon; cuff, Happy David; velvet lace-up sandals, P1,495, Schu

BLACK floor-length gown with rhinestone brooch, P2,495, Vintage by Cinderella; earrings, Happy David

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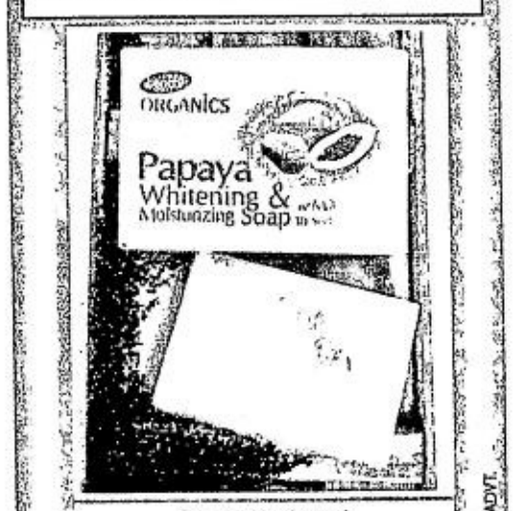

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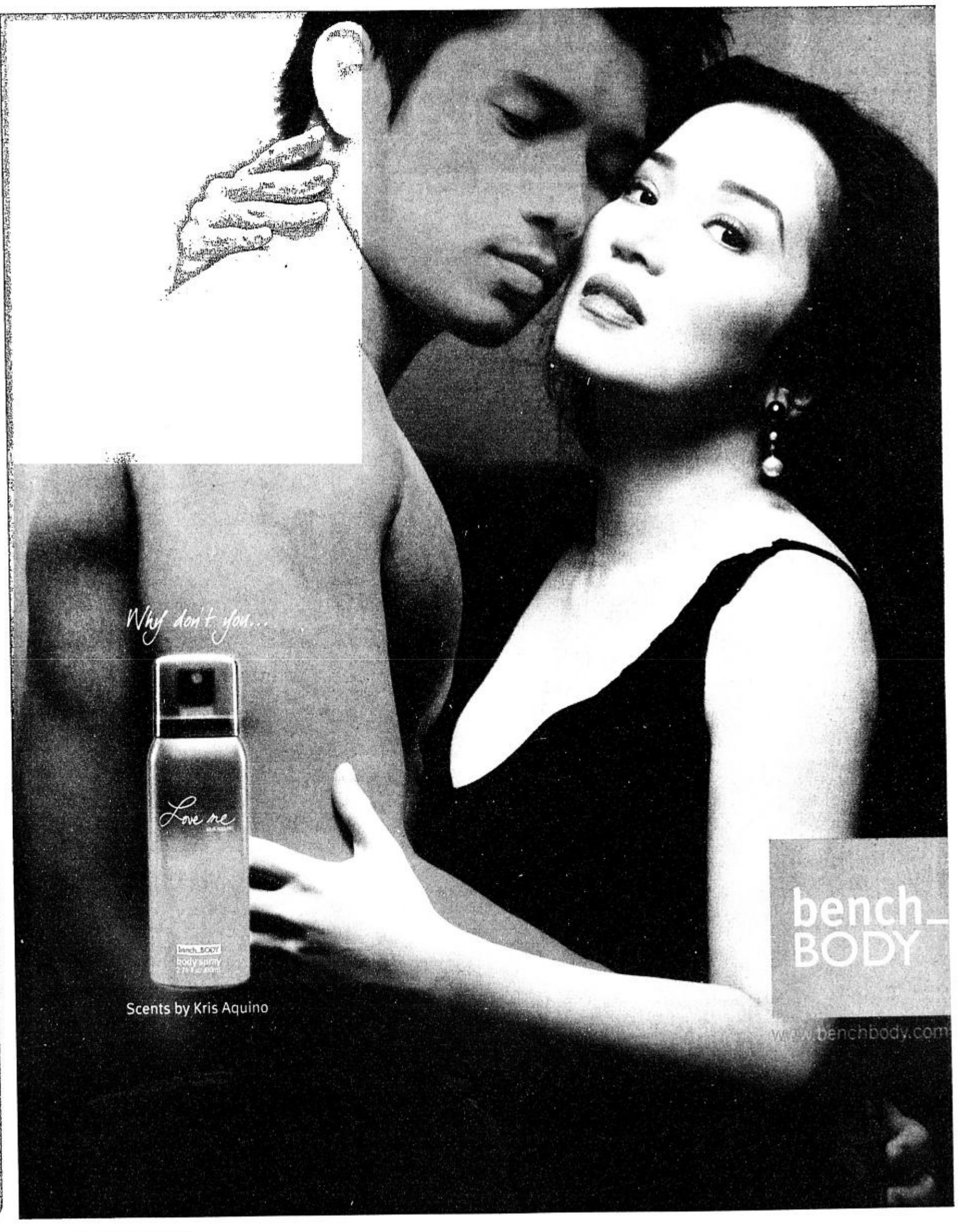

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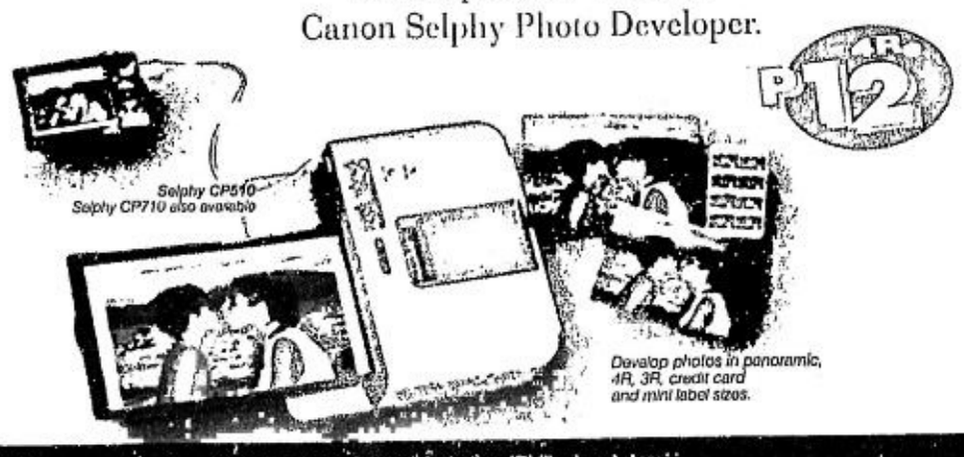

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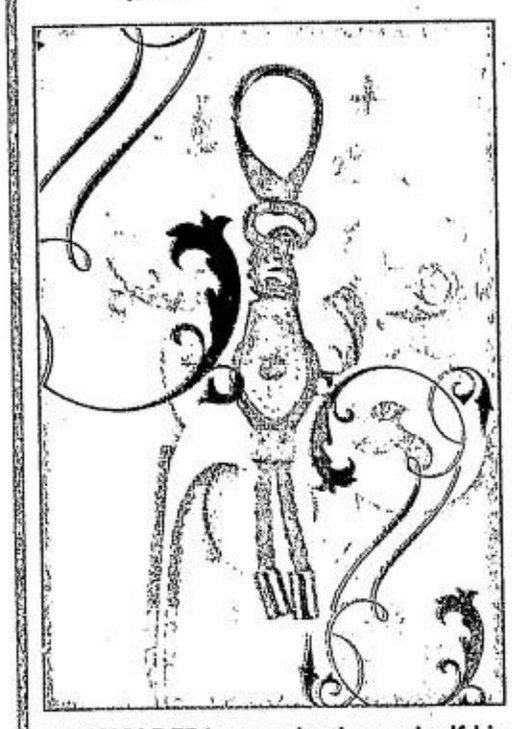
Fashion FLASH

Shoe stoppers and T-bags

WEDGE calfskin sandals (Zeppa Sandalo), P23,500



KEY-HOLDER in croco leather and calfskin (St. Tropez), P12,500

By Cheche V. Moral

The leather house's Gommino mocs, sporting prints by popular illustrator and New Yorker fashion editor Michael Roberts, are now in Manila

TOD'S HAS TAKEN VERY audacious moves this season.

The Italian luxury goods firm is introducing its first apparel collection this spring; it's designed by Derek Lam. And while Tod's aficionados in the Philippines won't be seeing Lam's limited-edition collection in Tod's Greenbelt 4 boutique, they will be happy to find limited-edition bags and footwear, including the famed Gommino mocs, sporting prints by popular illustrator and New Yorker fashion editor Michael Roberts.

Collaboration with artists has been a strong trend with luxury brands of late, and even the very traditional Tod's, which made its renown with the Gommino driving moccasins, is no exception.

Tod's, however, isn't veering too far from tradition. In fact, it looks to its roots even with Roberts' print: The artist fashions the signature mocs into what looks likes, well, a speed- or rowboat and a race car. Cheeky.

Previewed before the Asian press in November at the Hong Kong headquarters with the rest of Tod's S/S 2006 collection, the print appears in a couple of ladies' bags, a ladies' mocs, and even in a Degas shoe, Tod's popular ballerina flat. The illustrations are in black on a white background for the leather pieces; the tan canvas-and-leather bags with rope details sport white and pale-blue prints.

Tod's S/S 2006 collection will be available in late March. Stores Specialists Inc. exclusively distributes it in the Philippines.

Unlike in the previous spring, when Tod's made use of every imaginable color, the new pieces are predominantly in green, yellow, white, gold and brandy. It employs its trademark butter-soft leathers in both bags and footwear, some mixed with canvas.

Tod's bags are as pretty as they can get, though perhaps not as easily recognizable as pieces from other much-publicized labels. Tod's strength is in reworking and updating the classics—no bold displays of logos, though the label has notably used the rubber pebbles to accent bag designs. But this doesn't seem to hurt the Tod's image.

Hollywood patrons

Tod's is patronized by Hollywood's A-list—Gwyneth Paltrow and Jennifer Lopez, among countless others, have all been photographed toting their Tod's. This owes, perhaps, to the brand's emphasis on function as much as looks. Even paparazzi-hounded celebs, after all, need pieces that don't only look good but serve their purpose.

The new Benji bag sports multiple pockets, and it's predicted to be a hit. It has a retro boxy shape, with two front flaps with metal closures, and contrast stitchings. A sling pochette Benji, with a sequined version for the evening, is expected to delight younger customers.

There's the shopper Decoupage, with curvy, saddle lines that blend fabric and calfskin; metallic calfskin; snakeskin; or embellished with pailletes. Tod's also comes out with an oversized, boxy version of its popular zippered bag Miky, its answer to one of spring's hot trends.

The Gommino appears this time in ostrich or patent leather with contrast stitching. Apart from the Degas with gathered elastic sides (a dressier look is sequined), the label remakes its flats into peep-toes or cut-away sides, some in metallic skin. They're all accented with rubber pebbles, including the sexy peep-toe, nylon-and-calfskin styles with three-inch stacked heels. The wedge-heeled sandals come in either patent leather, or canvas with leather.

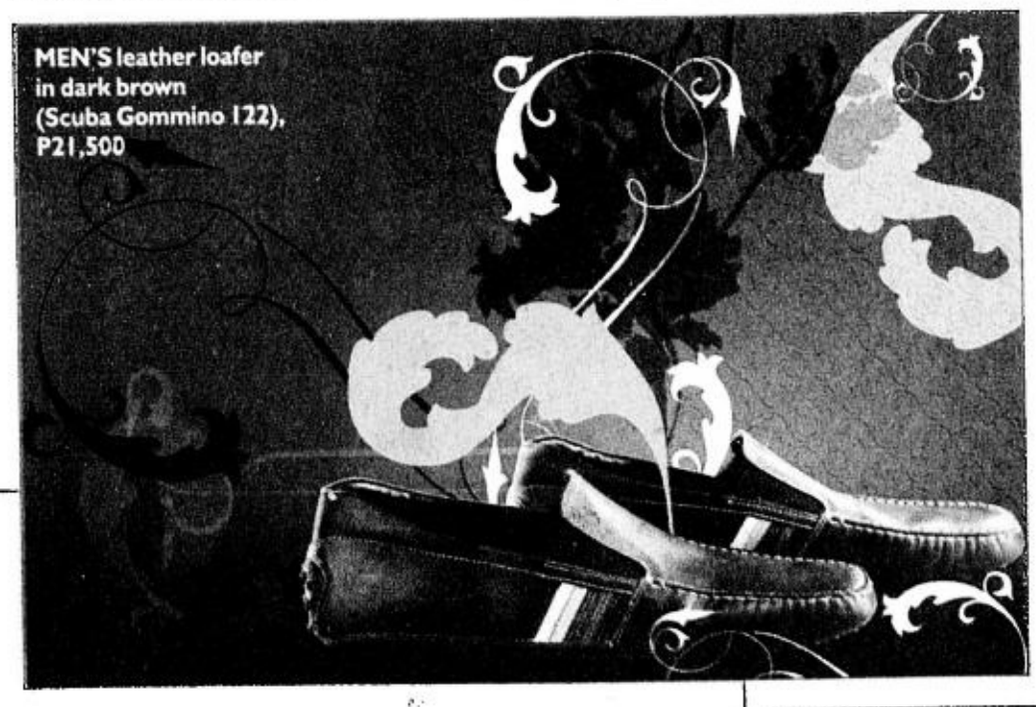
An alternative to the ultra-comfy Gommino is a sporty jelly-rubber-soled style with crisscross elastic sides.

The men's collection is very regatta-ready, the mocs sporting elastics and striped bands, rustproof eyelets, in suede and nylon. The lace-up versions come in suede or calfskin; another look comes in a three-tone combo. There are both tasseled and buckled city loafers, and leather flip-flops.

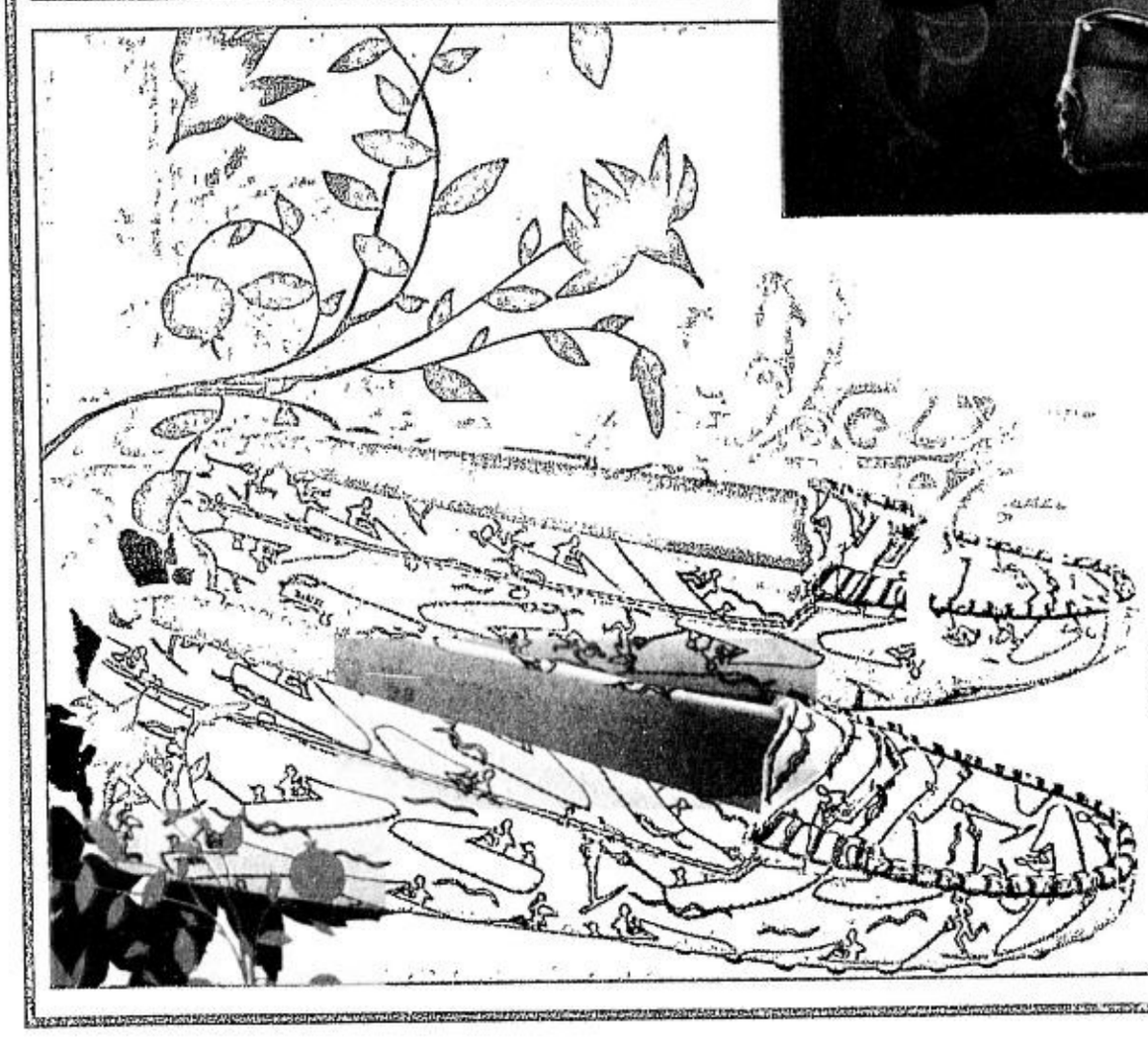
E-mail the author at cmoral@inquirer.com.ph

BLUE shoulder bag in smooth calf with stitching details (Benji Pattina Infilature), P81,500

SHOPPER bag in fabric with grain leather trim (Decoupage Tracolla Media), P54,500



MEN'S leather loafer in dark brown (Scuba Gommino 122), P21,500



LADIES' Gommino calfskin mocs in Michael Roberts print (Heaven Century), P22,500

PEEP-TOE sandals with stacked heels in calfskin and nylon (Coupe Decollete), P23,500

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Razzle-dazzle in the season's best prom accessories

AWAY FROM THE REVERberating sound of house music and the glow stick-loving lot is a world where the party set trades their sticks for stilettos, *sandos* for suits, and their rave garb for ballroom gowns.

Jenni Epperson

From DJs promulgating good vibes and hypnotic laser lights to teachers watching good table manners and girls checking out one another's frock—there goes the club cult entering the bourgeois ballroom scene we all know as the prom.

"Prom," short for "promenade," is derived from the Latin "prominare," which means "to drive forward." To "promenade" in the original sense was to go for a walk. In English, it came to mean to display one's self or one's finery.

And that's what happens at the prom, as 16- and 17-year-old students parade (some for the very first time) in their formal attire either in a grand ballroom, an auditorium or the school outdoor basketball court. Yes, one of my friends had her school prom at a school basketball court in broad daylight. Images of smudged mascara, sweaty suits and dwindling glam points come to mind. The horror!

Prom traditions add up to quite a list: getting a prom date, girls having their makeup done as a group, guys fitting suits, ballroom dancing, the prom king and queen, after-party hopping, first kiss, first love and other "firsts," primping and glamming up.

How about choosing the perfect gown or cocktail dress, as well as the right accessories, shoes, bags and other sparkly treats? Take note, if someone shows up in the same gown as yours, accessories will be your salvation.

Then again, sipping bubbly sometimes is enough to blur anyone's vision, making your gown look hotter!

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

More on page G3

Sparkly headbands

Leave the tiara to the prom queen. Headbands are way cooler to wear at the ball anyway.